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PHILOSOPHICAL AND PRACTICAL

T R E A T I S E

ON

T H E W I L L.

FORMING THE THIRD VOLUME OF A SYSTEM OF MENTAL PHILOSOPHY.

BY THOMAS C. UPHAM,

Professor of Moral and Mental Philosophy in Bowdoin College.

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## PART I

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### GENERAL NATURE OF THE WILL

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## P R E F A C E.

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IN offering to the public the following Treatise on the Will, I am obliged to presume, in no small degree, on its forbearance and candour. It is a subject which, in some of its applications, has been so long connected with Theological controversies, that it is almost impossible to write upon it without exciting the suspicion that the discussion will assume a party character. I hope the reader will do me the justice, in the outset, to believe that my object is not a party one, and that the ascertainment of truth is my only aim. If he will take the trouble carefully to read the Treatise through, as I hope he will before pronouncing an opinion upon it, I anticipate the pleasure of standing fair in his estimation, as a candid inquirer after the truth, whether I have been successful in my efforts or not.

I presume the reader, and the public generally, will agree with me in the admission that the subject of the Will is one of great importance, both theoretically and practically. And yet there can be no hesitation in saying, that it has never received that attention from mental

philosophers which is due to it. In those various Schools of philosophy, which from time to time sprung up among the ancient Greeks and Romans, it seems almost wholly to have escaped notice ; their speculations, so far as they related to the nature of the mind, being principally taken up with inquiries into the origin of knowledge and the nature of virtue. From the earlier English writers on the mind, Hobbes, Cudworth, Butler, Baxter, and others, although it was not wholly passed by, it received no attention worthy of particular notice at the present time, and in the present advanced state of mental science. Mr. Locke, however, who has treated of this subject incidentally in his chapter on Power, entered upon its investigation with his accustomed ability ; and as his views were given in the later editions of his *Essay on the Human Understanding*, they were greatly in advance of anything that had been written before. There are also some valuable remarks on the Will in Dr. Reid's writings; but he takes, on the whole, but a limited view of it. Mr. Stewart throws his observations, which are not numerous, and which consist rather of criticisms on the opinions of others than of a decided and systematic expression of his own, into an Appendix. The learned and able Inquiry into the Will of President Edwards does not profess to go over the whole ground, and to exhaust the whole subject ; but, on the contrary, as appears from the very titlepage, is limited to a particular aspect or view of it, viz., that Freedom of the Will which is sup-

posed to be essential to moral agency, virtue and vice, reward and punishment, praise and blame.

But I would not be understood to make these remarks in the way of complaint. It could hardly be expected to be otherwise. An examination into the will naturally comes last in order in all inquiries into the mind. The questions relative to the origin of knowledge and the intellectual part of our constitution come first in order; and these are questions which are not settled without much care and labour. The natural order of inquiry then brings us to the Sensibilities or sentient states of the mind, in distinction from the intellectual, viz., the various forms of emotion, and desire, and feelings of moral obligation. These must be examined and understood also, as well as the intellectual part. Until mental philosophy is in some degree satisfactorily established in these great departments, the doctrine of the will, although it may be a matter of conjecture, cannot be fully and correctly ascertained. But this period has arrived, and there is no longer any excuse for permitting this important inquiry to remain neglected. The subject is one of wide extent, perhaps more so than has sometimes been imagined; and one, too, which admits of various and important practical applications. My examination of it may be imperfect, (and, in truth, considering the variety of topics embraced in it, cannot well be otherwise,) and yet I cannot but indulge the hope, that some obscurities have been cleared up, that some leading principles have been established,

and that the subject is placed in various respects in a satisfactory light. But of this the candid reader, who will take the trouble to examine with suitable care what has been written, will be able to form a more accurate judgment for himself.

THOMAS C. UPHAM.

*Bowdoin College, May, 1840.*

# CONTENTS.

## PART I.

### GENERAL NATURE OF THE WILL.

#### CHAPTER I.

##### CLASSIFICATION OF THE MENTAL POWERS.

Section		Page
1.	Of the method of inquiry proper to be pursued	25
2.	The Will should be examined in connexion with other parts of the mind	28
3.	The states of the mind may be regarded in a threefold view	ib.
4.	Evidence of the general arrangement from Consciousness	29
5.	Evidence of the same from terms found in different languages	31
6.	Evidence from incidental remarks in writers	32
7.	Further proof from various writers on the mind	35
8.	A knowledge of the Will implies a preliminary knowledge of the Intellect	37
9.	Implies a preliminary knowledge also of the Sensibilities	38

#### CHAPTER II.

##### RELATION OF THE INTELLECT TO THE WILL.

10.	A connexion existing among all the parts and powers of the mind	40
11.	The intellectual part the foundation or basis of the action of the other parts of the mind	41
12.	The connexion of the understanding with the will	43
13.	The connexion of the understanding with the will shown from its connexion with action	43
14.	Further proof from an observation of the conduct of men	45
15.	Illustration of the statements of the preceding section	46
16.	Of the nature of the connexion between the understanding and will	48
17.	Of the opinions of Mr. Locke on this point	49
18.	Opinions of Sir James Mackintosh on the same subject	51
19.	The understanding reaches the will through the sensibilities	53
20.	The acts of the intellect the direct antecedents to emotions	54
21.	Emotions change with changes in the intellectual perceptions	55
22.	The powers of the will not perfectly correspondent to those of the intellect	56
23.	An energetic will sometimes found in connexion with limited powers of intellect	58

#### CHAPTER III.

##### RELATION OF THE SENSIBILITIES TO THE WILL.

24.	General statement in explanation of the term sensibilities	60
25.	Of what are strictly included under the sensibilities	61
26.	Acts of the intellect in immediate proximity with emotions	64
27.	Emotions not in proximity with volitions	66
28.	Emotions followed by desires and feelings of obligation	67

Section		Page
29. Desires in proximity with the will . . . . .		67
30. Obligatory feelings also in proximity with the will . . . . .		68
31. Further remarks and illustrations on this subject . . . . .		70
32. Opinions of metaphysical writers on the foregoing statements . . . . .		71
33. Of the strength of the desires . . . . .		72
34. Of the strength of feelings of obligation . . . . .		75
35. Of the influence of the sensibilities on the understanding . . . . .		76

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### VOLITIONS, OR VOLUNTARY STATES OF MIND.

36. The necessity of that controlling power which exists in the will . . . . .	78
37. Remarks on the nature of the will . . . . .	80
38. Of the nature of the acts of the will or volitions . . . . .	81
39. Volition never exists without some object . . . . .	82
40. It exists only in reference to what we believe to be in our power . . . . .	83
41. Volition relates to our own action and to whatever else may be dependent upon us . . . . .	84
42. Volitions involve a prospective element . . . . .	87
43. Volitions may exist with various degrees of strength . . . . .	88
44. Causes of the variation of the strength of the voluntary exercise . . . . .	89
45. Further illustrations of the same subject . . . . .	90
46. Of preference or indifference as applicable to the will . . . . .	91

#### CHAPTER V.

##### DISTINCTION BETWEEN DESIRES AND VOLITIONS.

47. Of an objection sometimes made to the general arrangement . . . . .	94
48. Probable cause of desires and volitions being confounded . . . . .	95
49. The distinction of desires and volitions asserted by consciousness . . . . .	96
50. Desires differ from volitions in fixedness and permanency . . . . .	98
51. Further proof of this distinction from language . . . . .	99
52. Sentiments of esteem and honour often imply this distinction . . . . .	100
53. Of some strictures on the foregoing remarks of Reid . . . . .	101
54. Volition may exist in respect to those complex acts which the mind can embrace as one . . . . .	103
55. If the distinction in question do not exist, the foundation of morals becomes unsettled . . . . .	105
56. Instances in illustration of the distinction in question . . . . .	107
57. Other instances in illustration of proof . . . . .	108
58. Proofs drawn from some facts in the constitution of the mind . . . . .	109
59. Of the chastisements of the Supreme Being inflicted on those he loves . . . . .	111
60. Objected that these views lead to contradictions . . . . .	113
61. Opinions of Mr. Locke and others on this subject . . . . .	115

#### P A R T I I.

##### LAW OF THE WILL.

#### CHAPTER I.

##### LAW OF THE WILL IMPLIED IN THE UNIVERSALITY OF LAW.

62. The preceding chapters preparatory to what follows . . . . .	119
63. Of the importance of the topics now entered upon . . . . .	120
64. The inquiry, whether the will has its laws preliminary to that of its freedom . . . . .	122

Section	Page
65. Everything throughout nature has its laws . . . . .	123
66. Reference to remarks of Cicero on the universality of law . . . . .	124
67. Reference to remarks of Hooker on the universality of law . . . . .	125
68. The universality of law implied in the belief of a Divine existence . . . . .	127
69. A presumption thus furnished in favour of the subjection of the will to law . . . . .	129

## CHAPTER II.

## LAWS OF THE WILL IMPLIED IN MORAL GOVERNMENT.

70. Of the existence of a moral government . . . . .	130
71. Laws of the will deducible from the first principles of moral government . . . . .	131
72. Laws of the will inferred from that supremacy or paramount authority which is implied in a moral government . . . . .	132
73. Inferred also from the fact, that the subjects of a moral government must be endued with adequate powers of obedience . . . . .	133
74. Laws of the will inferred from that rationality which is essential to the subjects of a moral government . . . . .	134
75. Laws of the will inferred from the fact that in the administration of a moral government motives are employed . . . . .	136
76. Inferred also from the application of rewards and punishments . . . . .	137
77. The same inferred from the fact that the moral government of the present life is in its nature disciplinary . . . . .	138
78. That the will has laws implied in the existence of virtue and vice . . . . .	139

## CHAPTER III.

## LAWS OF THE WILL IMPLIED IN THE PRESCIENCE OR FORESIGHT OF THE DEITY.

79. The notion which men naturally form of the Deity implies fore-knowledge . . . . .	142
80. The prescience of God involved and implied in his omniscience . . . . .	143
81. The prescience of God directly taught in the Scriptures . . . . .	145
82. The foreknowledge of events implies the foreknowledge of volitions . . . . .	146
83. Of the reasonableness of the foregoing views . . . . .	148
84. Application of these views to the will . . . . .	ib.
85. The views of this chapter in harmony with the doctrine of the influences of the Holy Spirit . . . . .	149

## CHAPTER IV.

## LAWS OF THE WILL IMPLIED IN THE PRESCIENCE OR FORESIGHT OF MEN.

86. Man as well as Deity susceptible of foresight . . . . .	150
87. Prescience or foresight of men in respect to their own situation and conduct . . . . .	151
88. Foresight of men in respect to the conduct of others . . . . .	153
89. Other familiar instances of this foresight . . . . .	154
90. The fact of laws of the will shown from the regularity of voluntary contributions and of deposits . . . . .	155
91. Of sagacity in the estimate of individual character . . . . .	157
92. Foresight of the conduct of masses of men and nations . . . . .	159
93. Proof from the regularity observable in the commission of crime . . . . .	161

## CHAPTER V.

## LAWS OF THE WILL INVOLVED IN ITS OWN NATURE.

Section		Page
94.	The doctrine of the will's subjection to law confirmed by consciousness . . . . .	163
95.	The same confirmed by the fact of the will's not being a subject, but an attribute . . . . .	164
96.	The same confirmed by the fact, that every exercise of the will implies an object . . . . .	165
97.	Confirmed also by the fact, that every exercise of the will implies a motive . . . . .	166
98.	Confirmed also by the fact, that every exercise of the will implies belief . . . . .	168
99.	Statement of other laws that are involved in the constitution or nature of the will itself . . . . .	169
100.	Proof on the subject before us from instances of predominant emotion and passion . . . . .	170
101.	Of the sense in which the proposition under consideration is to be understood . . . . .	172

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE LAW OF CAUSALITY AS APPLICABLE TO THE WILL.

102.	Of certain laws or principles which extend to all classes of objects . . . . .	174
103.	A belief in the law of causality founded in the peculiar structure of the human mind . . . . .	175
104.	Of the universality of belief in the law of causality . . . . .	176
105.	Of the classification into Preparative and Effective causes . . . . .	178
106.	Nature of Preparative and Effective causes . . . . .	179
107.	Opinions of various philosophers on this subject . . . . .	180
108.	Opinions of President Edwards on this subject . . . . .	183
109.	Results of a denial of the law of causality . . . . .	184
110.	Application of the views of this chapter to the will . . . . .	187
111.	Of the common and practical application of these views . . . . .	188

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE LAW OF UNIFORMITY AS APPLICABLE TO THE WILL.

112.	Belief of men in the continued uniformity of nature's operations . . . . .	190
113.	This belief exists in reference to mind as well as matter . . . . .	192
114.	Circumstances under which this belief arises . . . . .	193
115.	Of the true idea of chance, in distinction from uniformity . . . . .	194
116.	Grounds or foundation of this belief . . . . .	196
117.	Reference to the opinions of Reid and Abercrombie . . . . .	197
118.	Application of these views to the will . . . . .	199
119.	Application of these views to sciences having relation to human conduct . . . . .	200
120.	On the practical tendency of the general doctrine of law in its application to the will . . . . .	202

## CHAPTER VIII.

## NATURE AND KINDS OF MOTIVES.

121.	Of motives and their bearing upon the general doctrine of the will's subjection to law . . . . .	203
122.	Of the division of motives into Internal and External . . . . .	204
123.	External motives derive their efficacy from the mind . . . . .	205

## CONTENTS.

XIX

	Page
124. The character of motives depends in part on the constitutional traits of the individual . . . . .	207
125. Their character depends in part on temporary influences . . . . .	208
126. Further division of motives into Natural or Personal, and Moral . . . . .	209
127. Further statements illustrative of the distinction between natural and moral motives . . . . .	210
128. Motives coextensive with volitions . . . . .	212
129. Nature of the influence of motives . . . . .	214
130. Of the will's being governed by the strongest motive . . . . .	215
131. Of the elements of the contest within . . . . .	218

## PART III.

## FREEDOM OF THE WILL.

## CHAPTER I.

## NATURE OF MENTAL FREEDOM.

132. Of bodily in distinction from mental freedom . . . . .	223
133. Of unsuccessful attempts to explain the nature of freedom . . . . .	224
134. Freedom, considered as an element of thought rather than as a thing in actual realization, is the name of a simple abstract idea . . . . .	225
135. Occasions of the origin of the abstract idea of liberty . . . . .	227
136. Of the undefinableness of the term freedom . . . . .	228
137. Supposed definitions of freedom are either mere synonyms, or embrace some element which itself requires explanations . . . . .	ib.
138. Distinction between the idea and reality of liberty . . . . .	230
139. Of the source of our knowledge of liberty itself in distinction from the abstract idea of liberty . . . . .	231
140. Of the precise import of the phrase moral liberty . . . . .	232

## CHAPTER II.

## MENTAL HARMONY THE BASIS OR OCCASION OF MENTAL FREEDOM.

141. Statement of the inquiry in this chapter . . . . .	233
142. Occasions on which liberty exists . . . . .	235
143. Of the circumstances under which this mental harmony may be expected to exist . . . . .	236
144. Opinions of Bishop Butler on conscience . . . . .	237
145. Objected that perfect harmony of the mind is not realized in the present life . . . . .	239
146. Perfection of mental harmony and consequent mental liberty illustrated from the character of the Saviour . . . . .	240
147. Objected that the foregoing views are necessarily, and in their very terms, inconsistent with liberty . . . . .	242

## CHAPTER III.

## FREEDOM OF THE WILL.

148. Remarks on the nature of the freedom of the will . . . . .	244
149. Of the relation of the freedom of the will to the fact of its subjection to law . . . . .	245
150. Circumstances or occasions under which freedom of the will exists . . . . .	247
151. Evidence of the freedom of the will from consciousness . . . . .	249
152. Of an objection to the argument from consciousness . . . . .	250
153. Illustration of the will's freedom, drawn from the nature of motives . . . . .	252
154. Remarks in continuation of this subject . . . . .	253
155. Objected that the will is necessarily governed by the strongest motive . . . . .	256

## CONTENTS.

## CHAPTER IV.

Section	FREEDOM OF THE WILL IMPLIED IN MAN'S MORAL NATURE	Page
156. Remarks on the nature or mode of the argument . . . . .	257	
157. Of the elements of man's moral nature . . . . .	258	
158. Evidence of freedom of the will from feelings of approval and disapproval . . . . .	259	
159. Proof of freedom from feelings of remorse . . . . .	260	
160. Without the possession of liberty of will man could never have framed the abstract notions of right and wrong . . . . .	261	
161. Proof from feelings of moral obligation . . . . .	263	
162. Evidence from men's views of crimes and punishments . . . . .	264	
163. Prevalent opinions of mankind on this subject . . . . .	266	

## CHAPTER V.

## OTHER PROOFS OF FREEDOM OF THE WILL.

164. Evidence of the freedom of the will from languages . . . . .	267
165. Evidence from the occasional suspension of the will's acts . . . . .	268
166. Evidence of the freedom of the will from the control which every man has over his own motives of action . . . . .	269
167. The freedom of the will further shown from the attempts of men to influence the conduct of their fellow-men . . . . .	271
168. Further evidence from the observation of men's conduct . . . . .	ib.
169. Argued further from the view taken in the Scriptures . . . . .	273
170. Practical importance of the doctrine of liberty . . . . .	274

## CHAPTER VI.

## CONSISTENCY OF LAW AND FREEDOM.

171. Objected that the views maintained are contradictory . . . . .	277
172. Answered that they result necessarily from the evidence . . . . .	278
173. Denial of the alleged contradiction . . . . .	280
174. Admission of inexplicableness or mystery . . . . .	281
175. Of the limited powers of the human mind . . . . .	283
176. We find things which cannot be explained everywhere . . . . .	284
177. Illustrated from the influence of one man over another . . . . .	285
178. The opposite supposition attended with equal difficulty . . . . .	286
179. Both views are to be fully received . . . . .	287
180. The doctrine of the will's freedom equally important with that of its subjection to law . . . . .	288

## CHAPTER VII.

## ENTRALMENT OR SLAVERY OF THE WILL.

181. Of the occasions of mental entralment . . . . .	289
182. Inability to define entralment or slavery . . . . .	291
183. The nature of mental entralment illustrated by a reference to extorted promises . . . . .	292
184. Illustration of the same subject from cases of torture . . . . .	293
185. Historical illustrations of the subject . . . . .	295
186. The will enthralled by the indulgence of the appetites . . . . .	297
187. Entralment of the will occasioned by predominant and overruling propensities . . . . .	298
188. The will enthralled by inordinate ambition . . . . .	300
189. The will enslaved by the indulgence of the passions . . . . .	301
190. Inordinate intensity of the domestic affections . . . . .	302
191. Of the slavery of the will in connexion with moral accountability	304

## PART IV.

## POWER OF THE WILL.

## CHAPTER I.

## NATURE OF MENTAL POWER.

Section		Page
192.	Of the distinction between liberty and power . . . . .	309
193.	Proof of the distinction between liberty and power . . . . .	310
194.	The distinction of power and liberty involved in the fact of our being able to form the abstract ideas of power and liberty . . . . .	311
195.	Distinction of power and liberty shown from language . . . . .	312
196.	Further shown from the fact of our possessing a moral nature . . . . .	313
197.	Origin of the idea of power in Original Suggestion . . . . .	314
198.	Occasions of the origin of the idea of power . . . . .	315
199.	The idea of power involves the reality of power . . . . .	316
200.	Things exist which are not made known by the senses . . . . .	317
201.	Of power as an attribute of the human mind . . . . .	318
202.	Further shown by a reference to the Divine Mind . . . . .	320

## CHAPTER II.

## POWER OF THE WILL.

203.	Proof of power in the will from the analogy of the mind . . . . .	322
204.	The power of the will restricted and subordinate . . . . .	323
205.	Proof of power in the will from internal experience . . . . .	324
206.	Proved from the ability which we have to direct our attention to particular subjects . . . . .	325
207.	Proof of power in the will from observation . . . . .	326
208.	Of power of the will as exhibited in patience under suffering . . . . .	328
209.	Illustration of the subject from the command of temper . . . . .	329
210.	Further illustrations of this subject . . . . .	330
211.	Proved from the concealment of the passions on sudden and trying occasions . . . . .	331
212.	Further instances of concealment and repression of the passions . . . . .	333
213.	Illustrated from the prosecution of some general plan . . . . .	334
214.	The subject illustrated from the course of the first settlers of New-England . . . . .	336
215.	Illustrated by the fortitude exhibited by Savages . . . . .	337

## CHAPTER III.

## SELF-DETERMINING POWER OF THE WILL.

216.	General remarks on a self-determining power . . . . .	338
217.	Of a self-determining power of the mind . . . . .	339
218.	Of the objective or outward sphere of the mind's activity . . . . .	340
219.	Of a self-determining power of the will . . . . .	341
220.	Of such a self-determining power of the will as involves the dependence of the present volition on a former one . . . . .	343
221.	Opinions of President Edwards on this subject . . . . .	344

## CHAPTER IV.

## DIFFERENCES OF VOLUNTARY POWER.

222.	Differences in voluntary power seldom noticed . . . . .	345
223.	Remarks on constitutional weakness of the will . . . . .	346

Section		Page
224. Of comparative or relative weakness of the will . . . . .		347
225. Instances of want of energy of the will . . . . .		348
226. Remarks on great strength of the will . . . . .		350
227. Energy of the will as displayed under bodily suffering . . . . .		351
228. Energy of the will as shown in imminent danger . . . . .		353
229. Energy of the will as shown in martyrdoms . . . . .		354
230. Subject illustrated from two classes of public speakers . . . . .		356
231. Power of the will requisite in the military and other arts . . . . .		358
232. Energy of the will requisite in the men of revolutions . . . . .		359
233. Practical application of these views . . . . .		362

## CHAPTER V.

## CONSISTENCY OF CHARACTER.

234. Connexion of the philosophy of the will with consistency of character . . . . .		363
235. Illustrations of the inconsistent character . . . . .		365
236. Illustrations of the consistent character . . . . .		366
237. Of individuals remarkable for consistency of character . . . . .		367
238. Of the value of consistency in the religious character . . . . .		368
239. Of the foundation or basis of consistency and inconsistency of character . . . . .		371
240. Of inconsistency of belief in connexion with inconsistency of conduct and character . . . . .		372
241. Self-possession an element of consistency of character . . . . .		374
242. Consistency implies perseverance under changes of circumstances . . . . .		375
243. Consistency implies a control over the passions . . . . .		376

## CHAPTER VI.

## DISCIPLINE OF THE WILL.

244. Importance of a due discipline of the voluntary power . . . . .		378
245. A due balance of all the powers the most favourable state of things to the just exercise of the will . . . . .		380
246. Of the culture of the appetites, propensities, and passions, as auxiliary to the discipline of the will . . . . .		382
247. Some instances and proofs of the foregoing statements . . . . .		384
248. Importance of repressing the outward signs of the passions . . . . .		387
249. Of enlightening the intellect in connexion with the discipline of the will . . . . .		390
250. Further remarks on the same subject . . . . .		392
251. Of aiding the will by a reference to the regard of others . . . . .		394
252. Of aiding the will by a reference to the conscience . . . . .		396
253. Of the aids furnished by the principle of imitation . . . . .		397
254. Of aiding the will by placing ourselves in circumstances which do not admit of a retreat . . . . .		399
255. Of the effects of habit in giving strength to the will . . . . .		400
256. Of strengthening the will by religious considerations . . . . .		401

# T H E W I L L.

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## CHAPTER I

### CLASSIFICATION OF THE MENTAL POWERS.

#### § 1. *Of the method of inquiry proper to be pursued.*

WE now begin to approach the termination of these diversified and protracted inquiries. Having explored, so far as seemed to be necessary, the Intellect and the Sensibilities in their various forms of action, it now only remains to attempt to give a Philosophy of the Will.

In entering upon a discussion of the various questions connected with the Will, it is perhaps proper to make a few observations upon the course which we deem it expedient to pursue. And here we remark particularly, that it will be our desire to rest mainly upon facts, and the obvious deductions from them ; and to avoid, as much as possible, mere speculation. The indulgence of speculation, the giving loose to discursive flights, is often flattering to pride of intellect, and is perhaps indicative of the consciousness of mental power ; but it is not on all subjects, unless controlled and mitigated by a frequent recurrence to facts, favourable to the ascertainment of truth.

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The inquiries before us, so far at least as the mode of conducting them is concerned, ought to be prosecuted in essentially the same manner as our inquiries into the physical world. What we wish to know are the simple facts that exist, and the general laws which these facts obviously develope and clearly prove, in distinction from mere conjectures, however ingenious they may be. We apprehend, that this course, if we promise ourselves a favourable issue, is necessary in all discussions in respect to the mind, to whatever aspects of mind and to whatever powers they may relate.

Especially is this true in respect to the Philosophy of the Will, not only on account of the peculiar nature of the Will's operations, but also for another obvious reason. There must be evidently some point in the mental constitution, which connects man with his Maker. Ready as we are to grant, that men have liberty and power in their appropriate sphere of action, it is nevertheless true, that they are not in the strict sense of the term independent. All created beings, however great their powers may be, form but so many links in the immense chain of existence, that extends from the throne of God down to the humble forms of life, that approach nearest to inanimate matter. All, therefore, must, in some way, be connected with that great Source of existence, without whom, considered as the origin of being, there evidently could be existence nowhere. And accordingly, it is in the Will, in the volitive or voluntary part of our mental constitution, that we find the point of union, the position of contact with the Divine Mind ; for the Divine Mind, it should never be forgotten, runs through and connects itself with the whole range of created existences, holding them in their allotted spheres, and main-

taining, even in the remotest parts of the universe, the unity of place and of subordination. Accordingly, in the examination of the Will we must expect to meet with the apparently inconsistent attributes of freedom, dependence, and power, existing and uniting harmoniously in the same being. It is here, of course, that we meet with much, not only to perplex our judgment and to try our faith, but to encourage an irregular and unrestrained speculation. How necessary, then, to be on our guard, to proceed with caution, to keep our powers of investigation strictly within the legitimate limits of their action, and to be governed by those sentiments of modesty which are suitable to fallible beings !

We are aware that this proposed course is not altogether in accordance with what is termed the spirit of the age, which seems to call constantly for exaggeration ; for what is novel, strange, and unprecedented ; for something that will arouse and astonish, rather than convince. But this diseased and inordinate appetite for novelty and excitement ought to be rebuked rather than encouraged ; and least of all should it be permitted to find nourishment and support in the calm regions of philosophy. Let us then proceed to the interesting and difficult inquiry before us, (a subject which almost from the beginning of time has occupied the strongest minds and furnished the theatre for unremitting contests,) with those chastened feelings of moderation and caution which have been recommended, and relying chiefly upon facts and the legitimate inferences which they furnish, and indulging as little as possible in speculation, be content with what we may be able to establish on a firm foundation, without complaining that our limited and imperfect powers require some things to be left in obscurity.

*§ 2. The Will should be examined in connexion with other parts of the mind.*

It must constantly strike the observer, who carefully contemplates the facts which the universe everywhere exhibits, that no object which exists is wholly disconnected from other objects. Accordingly, in attempting to examine the nature of the Will, and in considering it in the various aspects in which it presents itself to our notice, it is obvious that we must not regard it as standing alone, and apart from everything else. It is true that we speak of the Philosophy of the Will, in distinction from that of the Intellect and the Sensibilities, but it is certainly not the less true that the Will participates in the general nature of the mind, and that it has a close connexion and sympathy with all its various modes of action. The general nature of the soul could not be altered, nor greatly affected in any way, without at the same time affecting the Will. Nor could a single susceptibility, even one of minor importance, be either struck out from the list of its attributes, or be greatly changed, without being attended with the same result. In the present discussion, therefore, we are naturally and urgently led to take a concise review of the general structure of the mind, for the purpose of more fully comprehending the relation which the Will sustains to the other parts.

*§ 3. The states of the mind may be regarded in a threefold view.*

Although we properly ascribe to the human soul the attribute of oneness or indivisibility, and it is very impor-

tant that we should keep this leading truth in mind, still there is abundant reason for saying that its nature can never be fully understood by contemplating it solely and exclusively under one aspect. There are, accordingly, three prominent and well-defined points of view, in which the mind may be contemplated, viz., the Intellect, the Sensibilities, and the Will ; otherwise expressed by the phrases INTELLECTIVE, SENSITIVE, and VOLUNTARY OR VOLITIVE states of the mind. Accordingly, as we have had occasion to remark in another place, whatever truly and appropriately belongs to the intellect, has something peculiar and characteristic of it, which shuts it out from the domain of the sensibilities ; and whatever has the nature of a volition has a position apart both from the intellectual and the sensitive. And we repeat here, that this is a fundamental arrangement, which, when properly and fully carried out and applied, includes the whole soul ; and that to the one or the other of these general heads everything involved in our mental existence may appropriately be referred.

*§ 4. Evidence of the general arrangement from Consciousness.*

In the introductory chapters to the volume on the Intellect, it was assumed, as a sort of preliminary principle, that the mind, in order to our being enabled to give a satisfactory analysis of it, must be contemplated in this threefold view. Accordingly, we thought it proper to bring forward some proofs on the subject, to such an extent and in such a way as seemed to be necessary. And if we could be certain, that every one who reads this volume, had read or would be likely to read the passages

referred to, it might not be necessary to delay upon this topic here. But as this may not be the case, and as there are some reasons why the Philosophy of the Will should stand in a considerable degree complete in itself, we shall take the liberty to repeat here, with some modifications of expression and of illustration, the arguments already adduced in support of the General Division in question.

And in the first place, the general arrangement which has been spoken of, viz., into the Intellective, Sensitive, and Voluntary or Volitive states of the mind, appears to be confirmed by the facts of our Consciousness.

Mental philosophers very correctly assure us, that our knowledge of the human mind depends in a very great degree upon Consciousness; and that by means of it we are enabled to ascertain what thought and feeling are in themselves, and to distinguish them from each other. Certain it is, if we reject the authority of Consciousness, we shall be involved in great difficulty, and cannot reasonably expect to make much progress in this kind of inquiry. But if it be true that the existence and distinctive character of the mental acts is made known, in a good degree at least, by consciousness, and that we may justly and confidently rely on its testimony, we naturally inquire, What does it teach in the present case? And in answering this question, we may safely appeal to any person's recollections, and ask, Whether he has ever been in danger of confounding a mere perception, a mere thought, either with emotions and desires on the one hand, or with volitions on the other? Does not his consciousness assure him, that the mental states, which we thus distinguish by these different terms, are not identical; that the one class is not the other; that they as actually differ from each other as association does from belief, or imagination from memory?

It would seem, therefore, that we may rest in this inquiry upon men's consciousness; not of one merely, but of any and all men. The universal testimony from this source is unquestionably the same. And the announcement which it makes is, that the leading departments of the mental nature are in some important sense separated from each other. The understanding, standing apart and distinguishable from the rest, may be regarded as holding the incipient or preparatory position. The Sensibilities also, in their two leading forms of the Natural and the Moral Sensibility, have their appropriate place. And the same may be said with equal confidence of the other great department of the mind.

*§ 5. Evidence of the same from terms found in different languages.*

It was further maintained in the volume on the Intellect, that we are enabled to throw some light on this subject from a consideration of the terms which are found in various languages. The train of thought was to this effect. Every language is, to some extent and in some important sense, a mirror of the mind. Something, consequently, may be learned of the tendency of the mental operations, not only from the form or structure of language in general, but even from the import of particular terms. There can be no hesitation in saying, that every language has its distinct terms, expressive of the threefold view of the mind under consideration, and which are constantly used with a distinct and appropriate meaning, and without being interchanged with each other as if they were synonymous. In other words, there are terms in all those languages which are spoken by nations considerably ad-

vanced in mental culture, which correspond to the English terms, INTELLECT, SENSIBILITIES, WILL. If such terms are generally found in languages, differing from each other in form and in meaning, it is certainly a strong circumstance in proof, that the distinction, which we propose to establish, actually exists. On the supposition of its having no existence, it seems impossible to explain the fact, that men should so universally agree in making it. If, on the other hand, it does exist, it is reasonable to suppose that it exists for some purpose ; and existing for some purpose, it must of course become known ; and being known, it is naturally expressed in language, the same as any other object of knowledge. And this is what we find to be the case. So that we may consider the expression to be an evidence of the fact ; the sign, an intimation and evidence of the reality of the thing signified.

#### § 6. *Evidence from incidental remarks in writers.*

And it appeared further in our former examination of this subject, that there are yet other sources of evidence which have a bearing upon it. No small amount of mental knowledge, it was there intimated, may be gathered from the incidental remarks of writers of careful observation and good sense. And accordingly, if we find remarks expressive of mental distinctions, repeatedly made by such men, when they are not formally and professedly treating of the mind, it furnishes a strong presumption that such distinctions actually exist. Their testimony is given under circumstances the most favourable to an unbiased opinion ; and ought to be received into the vast

amount of evidence, drawn from a great variety of sources, which goes to illustrate the true nature of the soul.

We shall accordingly introduce here a few passages of the kind which has been mentioned, which, in connexion with the passages formerly introduced in the chapter on the subject now before us, will help to confirm the propriety of the proposed general division.—“Loyalty,” says Junius in his First Letter, “in the HEART and UNDERSTANDING of an Englishman, is a natural attachment to the guardian of the laws.”—Bishop Burnet, in speaking of Archbishop Tillotson, says, “He was a man of the truest judgment and the best temper I had ever known. He had a clear HEAD, with a most tender and compassionate HEART.”\* In some comments which Boswell, in his Life of Dr. Johnson, makes on the writings and character of Rousseau, he has the following remark: “His absurd preference of savage to civilized life, and other singularities, are proofs rather of a defect in his UNDERSTANDING, than of any depravity in his HEART.”†

These passages, and others like them, although they do not go to the full extent of the proposed General Division, evidently involve the distinction between the Understanding and the Sensibilities, or the intellective and sensitive states of the mind. Passages of this kind, which incidentally involve the distinction between the Intellect and the Sensibilities, and also others which involve the distinction between the Intellect and the Will, or between the Sensibilities and the Will, may be found so very frequently, that it must be quite unnecessary to repeat them.

There are other passages, less frequent indeed, and yet abundantly numerous for our present purpose, which in a

\* Burnet’s History of his Own Time, Reign of William and Mary.

† Life of Johnson, vol. i., p. 491.

single sentence, and apparently with entire unconsciousness on the part of the writer, imply the distinction under consideration in its whole extent. Such is the passage which was quoted in the volume on the Intellect from Lord Chesterfield, who, in giving directions to his son as to the manner of conducting negotiations with foreign ministers, makes use of the following language: "If you engage his HEART, you have a fair chance of imposing upon his UNDERSTANDING, and determining his WILL."\*— Such is the remark also, introduced in the same place, of Drake, the author of the Literary Hours, that the deficiencies of Sir Richard Steele, formerly well known as one of the popular writers of England, were neither of the HEAD nor of the HEART, but of the VOLITION.†

We do not propose, however, after what has already been said in the Introductory Chapters of the volume on the Intellect, to multiply extracts here. One or two instances more will suffice.

The author of a recently published Inquiry concerning the Indications of Insanity, in describing the condition of a person whose mind is disordered, expresses himself as follows: "His WILL is no longer restrained by his JUDGMENT, but is driven madly onward by his PASSIONS."‡

Nor are the passages, which incidentally involve the distinction in question, to be found in the more modern writers merely. Francis Davison, who wrote some poetical pieces as long ago as 1602, has the following stanza:

\* Chesterfield, London ed., vol. iii., p. 137.

† Drake's Essays, illustrative of the Tattler, Spectator, and Guardian, vol. i., p. 50.

‡ Conolly's Inquiries concerning the Indications of Insanity, &c. London ed., p. 261.

“Where wit is overruled by WILL,  
 And will is led by fond DESIRE,  
 There REASON were as good be still,  
 As speaking, kindle greater fire.”

In the first Book of the Novum Organum (Aphorism 49th), Lord Bacon, no mean authority in mental as well as in physical inquiries, makes the remark, as if it were a common and well-known fact, that the Intellect is susceptible of influences from the Will and the Affections. “INTELLECTUS HUMANUS luminis sicci non est; sed recipit infusionem a VOLUNTATE et AFFECTIBUS.”

#### § 7. *Further proof from various writers on the mind.*

The distinction in question has also been fully recognised, sometimes incidentally, and sometimes in a more formal manner, by various distinguished writers on the mind. In the volume on the Intellect, and in connexion with the same general subject which is now before us, we had occasion to quote the following somewhat striking passage from Mr. Locke: “Thus, by a *due consideration*, and *examining* any good proposed, it is in our power to raise our *desires* in a due proportion to the value of that good, whereby in its turn and place it may come to work upon the *will*, and be pursued. For good, though appearing, and allowed ever so great, yet till it has raised *desires* in our minds, and thereby made us uneasy in its want, it reaches not our *wills*.<sup>\*</sup>” Here it must be obvious to every one that the threefold division in question is distinctly recognised. The due consideration and examining, which are spoken of, imply an act of the intellect; the desires, which are subsequently raised, are appropri-

\* *Essay on the Understanding*, book ii., ch. xxi., § 46.

ately ascribed to the sensibilities; and these last are followed by an act of the other part of our nature, viz., the will.

Omitting the other passages, which were introduced in the former discussion of the subject from Hume, Mackintosh, Thery, and some others, it will perhaps tend to strengthen the general argument, if we give in the present place a few extracts from other distinguished writers, all obviously looking in the same direction and of the same import.—In the valuable writings of Dr. Reid, we have the following statement: “The distinction between Will and Desire has been well explained by Mr. Locke; yet many later writers have overlooked it, and represented Desire as a modification of Will.—Desire and Will agree in this, that both must have an object, of which we must have some conception; and therefore both must be accompanied with some degree of understanding. But they differ in several things.”\*

“Our actions,” says the ingenious author of the Light of Nature Pursued, “being constantly determined either by the decisions of our Judgment, or solicitations of our Desires, we mistake them for the Will itself.”†

Bockshammer, speaking of the Desires and Passions, while he regards them of inestimable worth in their proper place, says, that they are subordinate powers, “and should, therefore, never be released from the guardianship and guidance of the Understanding and Will.”‡

“Whatever classification of the mental powers we may think proper to adopt,” says President Day, “it is of the

\* Reid on the Active Powers of the Human Mind, Essay I.

† Tucker’s Light of Nature Pursued, Art. Freewill, § 8.

‡ Bockshammer on the Freedom of the Human Will, Kaufman Translation, p. 36

first importance to bear steadily in mind, that distinct faculties are not distinct agents. They are different powers of one and the same agent. It is the *man* that perceives, and loves, and hates, and acts ; not his UNDERSTANDING, or his HEART, or his WILL, distinct from himself.”\*

Passages similar to these, sometimes incidentally and sometimes more formally introduced in their writings, are not unfrequently found in the works of men, who are favourably known as mental philosophers ; and whose opinions are justly entitled to great weight on any matter connected with mental operations. The extracts, which have now been made, are too easy and obvious in their application to the subject under consideration to require any comment.

*§ 8. A knowledge of the Will implies a preliminary knowledge of the Intellect.*

Undoubtedly illustrations and proofs might be carried to a much greater extent. But probably enough has been said, in other parts of these inquiries if not here, to explain precisely the views which we entertain on this subject, to intimate and partially unfold the various sources of proof, and to shield us from the imputation of asserting what cannot be maintained. Supported by consciousness, the structure of languages, the incidental remarks of writers on a multitude of occasions, and by the opinions of many able metaphysicians, we felt ourselves justified in going forward in our inquiries, and we now feel justified in continuing them, with the distinction in question as their basis. And now we have further to remark, if there

\* Day’s Inquiry respecting the self-determining Power of the Will, p. 40.

be that threefold distinction in the mind which has been contended for, then each of these prominent parts may with great propriety be treated of separately ; that is to say, the Will may be made a subject of examination in distinction from the Understanding, and both in distinction from the Affections, or more properly from the Sensibilities, which is the more general and appropriate term. But in the order of inquiry the Understanding naturally comes first, and then the Sensibilities, and the Will last. And hence we are led to observe, that a thorough knowledge of the Will necessarily implies a knowledge of the Understanding.

We are compelled, therefore, to presume, that the reader is already acquainted with what has been variously termed the intellective, perceptive, or cognitive part of our nature ; that he knows something of the nature of sensation and perception, and of theceptive power, which in its external action is based upon them ; that he has some acquaintance with the power of original suggestion, with the judgment or relative suggestion, the memory, reasoning, imagination, and the like, which are properly included under the general head of the understanding or intellect. We indulge the hope that this presumption will prove well-founded. Certain it is, that no man is entitled to pronounce with confidence on any discussion having relation to the Will, without possessing the elements and outlines, at least, of such preliminary knowledge.

§ 9. *Implies a preliminary knowledge also of the Sensibilities.*

It seems proper to observe further, that similar remarks

will apply to the Sensibilities. To a correct knowledge of the Will, a knowledge of the Sentient or Sensitive states of the mind cannot be considered less necessary than of the Intellective. And who that has given but even a slight attention to mental inquiries, can be supposed ignorant of that interesting part of our nature ? It is there we find the emotions which invest the various forms of nature with beauty and grandeur. It is there we are to seek for a knowledge of the propensities and passions, which bind men together in society ; the sources at once of their activity, their joy, and their sorrow. And there also we discover the elements of accountability, the feelings that approve and disapprove, the evidences and signatures of the law written within, which no one either obeys or violates without the appropriate reward or condemnation. With this preparatory knowledge, we are ready to advance with some hope of a successful issue. The natural course of inquiry is through the Understanding, and the Heart or Sensibilities, upward to the Will. The latter sustains the relation of a higher and more authoritative power ; a point of view in which we shall more fully consider it in some following chapters. Without this, all the rest, left without the supervision and control of the master's hand, would be comparatively useless. So that, in considering the position which the Will maintains, we are naturally reminded of the passage which Horne Tooke has made so celebrated :

“ ’Tis the last keystone  
That makes the arch ; the rest, that there were put,  
Are nothing, till that comes to bind and shut.”

## CHAPTER II

## RELATION OF THE INTELLECT TO THE WILL.

*§ 10. A connexion existing among all the parts and powers of the mind.*

In the preceding Chapter we have insisted on a three-fold view of the mind as fundamental; and we may add here our conviction, that the recognition of this distinction is not only fundamental in respect to a knowledge of the mind in general, but is particularly necessary to a full understanding of the doctrine of the Will. In truth, if there is not such a distinction, and if, on the contrary, the Voluntary part of our nature is truly identical with the Sensitive, as some philosophical lucubrations seem to maintain, it is very obvious that there can be no such thing as a Philosophy of the Will.

But to assert and even to prove the existence of the important distinction which we have been contemplating, is not enough. It seems proper to say something further in illustration of the precise relation which the three leading Departments of the mind sustain to each other. And as preliminary to this, we shall occupy a few moments in considering the connexion, which seems to exist among all the various powers of the mind, both those of a more general and those of a subordinate character.

A very slight observation, it is believed, will suffice to teach us the general fact, that there is some bond of union, some principle of connexion pervading every variety of

the mental action. And the further this observation is carried on, the more obvious and indispensable will this connexion appear. If, for instance, we examine those subordinate powers, which are properly arranged together under the general head of the Intellect, we shall readily find this to be the case. There is no perception without the antecedent sensation ; there is no memory without attention ; no reasoning without both memory and association ; and neither reasoning nor imagination without the power of perceiving relations or relative suggestion. But in all these cases and in others, they stand, if we may be allowed the expression, side by side, ready to lend each other an assisting hand, and comparatively powerless and fruitless without this mutual aid. And if such be the state of things in the instances which have been particularized, then analogy would lead us to suppose, that there is a like principle of union running through and connecting together the more general departments of the mind ; and this too is abundantly obvious on even a slight examination.

*§ 11. The intellectual part the foundation or basis of the action of the other parts of the mind.*

Of the Understanding in particular, it may be said with some appearance of reason, that we find in it the foundation, the basis of the existence and of the action both of the Sensitive and of the Voluntary nature. Let us examine this point, in the first place, in reference to the Sensibilities. When that part of our nature is in action, we find ourselves, according to the circumstances of the case, pleased or displeased ; we are filled with admiration or disgust ; we love or hate ; we approve or disapprove ;

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and exercise other emotions, desires, and passions. But the slightest examination will teach us that this could not be the case; that these states of mind could not exist, without the acquisition of knowledge, which of course implies the exercise of the intellect. If we approve or disapprove a thing, it is very evident that we must have a knowledge of some object of approval or disapproval; that there must be something upon which these emotions can fasten. And again, if we exercise love or hatred, the intellect must have been previously employed in making known the existence and qualities of those objects, towards which the passions of love and hatred are directed.

#### § 12. *The connexion of the understanding with the will.*

And these views will be found equally applicable to the Will. There can no more be an act of the will without some object of knowledge before the mind, than there can be remembrance without a thing remembered, or association without an object, to which the principle of association attaches itself. Hence, if we could find a man, in whom the intellect is entirely destroyed in fact, or is virtually destroyed by being entirely dormant, we should find at the same time an extinction both of the passions and the will.

Happily the records of the human race, with the exception of cases of idiocy and mental malformation, furnish but a solitary instance of that extreme extinction of the intellect which we now have in view; we refer to the case of the unfortunate Caspar Hauser, whose melancholy history is so well known. As the intellect cannot be brought into action and made to develop itself, except by first coming into contact with the material world, the

result of this young man's confinement from childhood in one place, and of his entire seclusion from everything external to his horrid prison, was, as would naturally be expected, the utter prostration of his Understanding. Scarcely a ray of knowledge illuminated the intellective region. The feeble perceptions of early infancy, such as we find in those that have scarcely explored the boundaries of the cradle that rocks them, were in his case combined with a body that had nearly expanded itself to the fulness of manhood. Such imbecility and vacuity of the Intellect of course furnished no foundation for the development of the Sensibilities. If we may rely upon the accounts that are given of him, there was in general an unruffled and placid surface, a great calm of the mind. And as there was no excitement, no tossing to and fro of the sensibilities, but everything there was wrapped up in slumber and inactivity ; so there was no developement of self-determination, no firmness of resolve, no inward vigour and promptness of the voluntary power. The slightest impulse from the minds of others was followed by the consentaneous and unresisting movement of his own ; and his Will, so far from indicating any elements of decision and stability, could be likened only to the flexible reed of the desert, which, without knowing the power that presses it, is shaken and bent by every changing breeze.

§ 13. *The connexion of the understanding with the will shown from its connexion with action.*

As it is the object of this chapter to consider particularly the connexion existing between the Understanding and the Will, and the relation they sustain to each other, we may remark further, that the connexion of the intel-

lectual with the voluntary constitution is apparent from the connexion of the intellectual part or understanding with *action*.—Whatever difference of opinion there may be in other respects, there is a general agreement in this, that the mind, both in its internal constitution and in its adaptation to outward objects, is evidently framed for movement. It was never meant to be essentially dormant, either in a state of unconsciousness or of mere contemplation and emotion; but was rather, when we consider its connexion with other states and modes of existence, designed to be an attendant and ministering angel to the great Being who made it, performing His errands of observation and mercy, in whatever sphere of activity He might see fit to designate.—And it seems to be further assented to, not only that the various parts of man's nature conspire to action, but also that the immediate and proximate seat and source of action is in the Will; in other words, that the Will emphatically sustains the part of the directing, controlling, and executive power of the mind. The Will, in particular, leads to *outward action*. It must be obvious to every one that there can be no bodily action, excepting what is termed involuntary, without a concurrent act of the will; and it is equally obvious that action, in its various forms, embraces the multiplied duties, and is the foundation of the usefulness of man.

Now if these views be correct, and if we wholly dis sever the understanding from action, where is its utility? If the highest exertions of the intellect can lead to no possible results, except the mere accumulation of an inoperative and lifeless mass of knowledge, what are the benefits connected with it? If we are assured on the highest authority, that knowledge without charity is no better than sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal, it is certainly

of no more worth without practical results, without correspondent action. But if we are not prepared to admit, that the intellect, which is so often and so justly pronounced the glory of man's nature, is without worth, it seems to follow, that its value depends upon its connexion with the Will. Action, as we have seen, was undoubtedly one of the principal objects that was had in view in the creation of the human mind ; but it is evident, that the Understanding can have no connexion with action exterior to itself, and independently of its own accumulative processes, except in the direction and with the concurrent movement of the voluntary power. And on these grounds, among others, we may assert the relationship and the intimate connexion of these two great departments of the mind.

*§ 14. Further proof from an observation of the conduct of men.*

In addition to the considerations which have already been brought forward, we may find further proofs of the connexion which is alleged to exist, in our manner of addressing men when we wish them to pursue a certain course. We do not address the Will directly and alone ; nor do we directly address ourselves to the emotions and passions of men ; but we commonly lay the basis of our efforts in a movement on the Understanding. We make this statement with a good degree of confidence ; and we appeal to every one's recollection, whether it be not true.

A person, for instance, wishes another person to join with him in some enterprise ; and perhaps it is one of an exciting and difficult nature. But where does he begin ? Does he immediately lay a requisition upon the will, com-

manding and requiring the individual to enter upon the proposed course at once? Every one must see that this would certainly defeat his own purpose. If, therefore, he would indulge the hope of succeeding, he must act upon the Will, by taking advantage of the relations which it sustains to other parts of our mental nature. Accordingly, he commences his attempts by an appeal to the understanding, endeavouring to show, by plain and incontrovertible statements, the practicability, propriety, and benefits of his propositions; and he knows perfectly well, that, unless he succeeds in convincing the understanding, he has no prospect of rousing the will to action, and that the probability of a favourable movement on the part of the voluntary power will be in proportion, or nearly so, to the favourable position of the intellect.

#### § 15. *Illustration of the statements of the preceding section.*

On the death of Julius Cæsar, Antony is represented by Shakspeare, who well knew what process was requisite in effecting such an object, as endeavouring to stir up a "sudden flood of mutiny." But he does not command the multitude, who, in their state of want and ignorance, are ready for almost any purpose, whether good or evil, to go forth at once, and consummate his projects of fire and slaughter. Too shrewd an observer of human nature for this, it is worthy of notice, that he addresses neither the will nor the passions, till he had first made a lodgment in the understanding. After saying, in excuse of his coming to speak at Cæsar's funeral, that Cæsar was a just and faithful friend to himself, he goes on to state, (what probably were the plain and undoubted facts in the case,) that Cæsar had brought to Rome many cap-

tives ; that by their ransom-money he had filled the public coffers ; that he had wept over the sufferings of the poor ; that he had refused a kingly crown at the Lupercale, &c. These statements, which were mere facts addressed to the understanding, and some of them at least, and probably all of them, were incontrovertible, of course laid the foundation for a change in the passions, as they were designed to do. And the people, who just before had called Cæsar a tyrant, and were glad that Rome was rid of him, now began to admit, under the influence of a nascent leniency of feeling, that there was much reason in Antony's sayings, and that Cæsar had suffered wrong.

Having thus prepared the way by removing the hostile feelings that antecedently existed, he now began to ply them in another direction. He told them of the greatness of Cæsar ; of the power which he had once exercised ; of his ability to stand against not one nation merely, but the whole world, though now so low that none would do him reverence. And when, still continuing to approach the feelings by facts first addressed to the perceptive powers, he further proceeded to show them the bloody mantle, and to speak of the Testament which bequeathed to them his bountiful legacies, the passions, which had already begun to quicken in Cæsar's favour, were kindled to a flame. It was then that the object of the speaker was accomplished, as he foresaw it would be. There was no want of motives, no hesitancy of the will, no slowness to action. The fickle multitude, driven about like the bilows that are agitated by the wind, were no longer the friends of Brutus ; nor were they indifferent and idle spectators. But rushing from street to street, and seizing such weapons as their purposes required, they called for revenge, slaughters, and burnings.

§ 16. *Of the nature of the connexion between the understanding and will.*

Presuming enough has been said, at least for the present, in support of the actual existence of the connexion we are inquiring into, we are now prepared to say something of its nature. Although the connexion really exists, and is of very prominent importance, it is not meant to be said that it is a *direct* one. In other words, the Understanding, whatever opinions may have formerly prevailed on the subject, is, in no case, in direct contact with the Will. When, therefore, we speak of the operation of the intellect upon the will, we mean an indirect or circuitous operation ; that is to say, one which is carried on through the mediation of the *sensibilities*, under which term we include the various forms of emotion and desire, together with feelings of obligation.

The appropriate and distinctive object of the Understanding is knowledge. But we confidently venture the assertion, that knowledge alone has no tendency to control volition. It is possible for a person in the exercise of his intellectual powers to possess unlimited knowledge, to explore and exhaust every field of inquiry ; and yet, if his knowledge be unattended with feeling, if it be followed by no form of emotion or desire, or obligatory sentiment, it will leave the Will perfectly indifferent and motionless. Any other supposition is at variance with every day's experience.

A certain person, for example, comes to the conclusion, after a long train of reasoning, that the possession of a definite amount of property would be beneficial to himself and family. This conclusion is of course the result of a

purely intellectual process. But if it be utterly passionless; if it be unattended with a single emotion or desire, it will altogether fail to arouse the will to activity or to secure a single effort. In the constitution of the human mind, everywhere so full of wisdom and of mystery, the Sensibilities, which are as different from the will as from the understanding, are located between the two. They form the connecting link which binds them together. Strike out the sensibilities, therefore, and you necessarily excavate a gulf of separation between the intellect and the will, which is forever impassable. There is from that moment no medium of communication, no bond of union, no reciprocal action.

§ 17. *Of the opinions of Mr. Locke on this point.*

Here is one point, as those who are acquainted with the history of philosophical opinions will probably recollect, on which writers on the Will have sometimes fallen into great error, viz., in placing the intellectual in juxtaposition with the voluntary or volitive power, and supposing the latter to be under the direct operation of the former. Mr. Locke himself seems to have been of this opinion at first, and to have published to the world his belief, that the understanding, forming an estimate of what is the greatest good, is the direct and immediate means of controlling the Will. But he afterward, on more mature examination, announced, with the honesty and love of truth for which he is so celebrated, his decided change of opinion.—“ It seems, (says he,) so established and settled a maxim, by the general consent of all mankind, that good, the greater good, determines the will, that I do not at all wonder, that, when I first published my thoughts on

E

this subject, I took it for granted; and I imagine that by a great many I shall be thought more excusable for having done so, than that now I have ventured *to recede from so received an opinion.* But yet, upon a stricter inquiry, I am forced to conclude, that good, the greater good, *though apprehended and acknowledged to be so,* does not determine the will, until our *desire,* raised proportionably to it, makes us uneasy in the want of it. Convince a man ever so much, that plenty has its advantages over poverty; make him see and own, that the handsome conveniences of life are better than nasty penury; yet, as long as he is content with the latter, and finds no uneasiness in it, he moves not; *his will is never determined to any action* that shall bring him out of it. Let a man be ever so well persuaded of the advantages of virtue, that it is as necessary to a man who has any great aims in this world, or hopes in the next, as food to life; yet, till he hungers and thirsts after righteousness, till he feels an uneasiness in the want of it, his will will not be determined to any action in pursuit of this greater good."— "For good," he says in another passage, "though appearing and allowed ever so great, yet till it has raised desires in our minds, and thereby made us uneasy in its want, reaches not our wills."\*

He was satisfied, on repeated examination and on the most mature reflection which he could give to the subject, that the mere intellectual conviction of what might tend to the greatest good, has no effect upon the Will, till it has first excited within us desires after that good.

\* *Essay concerning the Human Understanding, book ii., ch. xxi.*  
§ 35, 46.

§ 18. *Opinions of Sir James Mackintosh on the same subject.*

The same view is taken by other profound metaphysicians, so that, independently of its own obvious reasonableness, there is no want of authority in its favour. The following expressions of Sir James Mackintosh show what were his own convictions on the subject.—“Through whatever length of *reasoning* the mind may pass in its advances towards action, there is placed at the end of any avenue, through which it can advance, some principle wholly unlike mere reason, some *emotion* or *sentiment* which must be touched before the *springs of will and action* can be set in motion.”

And in another passage, a part of which follows, he maintains the assertions here made at considerable length.—“We can easily imagine a percipient and thinking being without a capacity of receiving pleasure or pain. Such a being might perceive what we do; if we could conceive him to reason, he might reason justly; and if he were to judge at all, there seems no reason why he should not judge truly. But what could induce such a being to *will* or to *act*? It seems evident that his existence could only be a state of passive contemplation. Reason, as reason, *can never be a motive to action*. It is only when we superadd to such a being sensibility, or the capacity of emotion or sentiment, (or what in corporeal cases is called sensation,) of desire and aversion, that we introduce him into the world of action. We then clearly discern, that, when the conclusion of a process of reasoning presents to his mind an object of desire, or the means of obtaining it, a motive of action

begins to operate ; and reason may then, but not till then, have a powerful though indirect influence on conduct. Let any argument to dissuade a man from immorality be employed, and the issue of it will always appear to be an appeal to a feeling. You prove that drunkenness will probably ruin health. No position founded on experience is more certain. Most persons with whom you reason must be as much convinced of it as you are. But your hope of success depends on the drunkard's fear of ill health ; and he may always silence your argument by telling you that he loves wine more than he dreads sickness. You speak in vain of the infamy of an act to one who disregards the opinion of others ; or of its imprudence to a man of little feeling for his own future condition. You may truly, but vainly, tell of the pleasures of friendship to one who has little affection. If you display the delights of liberality to a miser, he may always shut your mouth by answering, 'the spendthrift may prefer such pleasure ; I love money more.' If you even appeal to a man's conscience, he may answer you, that you have clearly proved the immorality of the act, and that he himself knew it before ; but that now, when you had renewed and freshened his conviction, he was obliged to own, that his love of virtue, even aided by the fear of dishonour, remorse, and punishment, was not so powerful as the desire which hurried him into vice."\*—He concludes with remarking, that it is thus apparent that *the influence of reason on the will is indirect*, and arises only from its being one of the channels by which the objects of desire or aversion are brought near to these springs of voluntary action.

\* *View of the Progress of Ethical Philosophy*, section v

¶ 19. *The understanding reaches the will through the sensibilities.*

While, therefore, we may be assured that there is an established and fixed connexion between the understanding and the will, and that they are, by the constitution of our nature, reciprocally indispensable to each other, this connexion is not to be regarded as direct and immediate; but the understanding affects the will through the medium of the Sensibilities. The direct connexion, therefore, of the understanding is with the sensibilities; and with that portion of them which are appropriately, and by way of distinction from the other sentient states of the mind, termed the Emotions. It is true, there is no resemblance between an emotion and a mere perception or thought; in their nature they are entirely different from each other. "An emotion of pleasure or pain," in the language of Mackintosh, "differs much more from a mere perception, than the perceptions of one sense do from those of another. The perceptions of all the senses have some qualities in common. But an emotion has not necessarily anything in common with a perception, but that they are both states of the mind."

But these two classes of mental states, although they differ so entirely in their nature, are placed in juxtaposition to each other; by which we mean, that one is immediately successive to the other, or, in other words, that they hold the relation of antecedence and sequence. And it is here that the understanding makes its approaches upon the voluntary power, and contributes to its being called into action, as will be seen more distinctly in some remarks of the following chapter.

E 2

§ 20. *The acts of the intellect the direct antecedents to emotions.*

Let us delay here a moment, and notice that marked and interesting fact in our mental economy, that knowledge is the foundation of emotion. All the knowledge which men have, with the exception of the mere relations of things, has reference either to matter or mind ; to the outward and external, or to the invisible and spiritual world. But in both its great forms, and under whatever possible aspect it may exist, we find it to be attended with emotion. No man walks the earth, and contemplates its variegated features, its mingled yet harmonizing exhibitions of wood and water, of hill and vale, and tree and flower, and sun and cloud, without experiencing the origin of a feeling within him additional to the mere perception of these objects. There is a gush of pleasure, a flow of emotive sensibility, which is better known by the experience than by any description. The emotion, however, is not always of the same kind. There are times and places where nature puts on her more awful and frowning aspects, where she appears in storm and power and gloom. And then the emotion ascends from the merely beautiful to the grand and sublime.

And there are also other objects of knowledge than mere natural objects ; all the varibus and wonderful attributes of mind ; the patience and the fortitude, and the joy and the sorrow, and the magnanimity, and the crime, and the justice, which diversify the history of the human race. The knowledge of these, too, (for everything is dormant until the intellect has put itself in exercise and has explored the objects which come within its sphere,)

arouses the Sensibility, and calls forth the strongest emotions; not only emotions of the beautiful and sublime, of joy and sorrow, but of approval and disapproval, according to the nature and character of the thing which is presented before us.

*§ 21. Emotions change with changes in the intellectual perceptions.*

We may not only lay down the general truth, that emotions depend for their existence on the antecedent acts of the intellect, but also that the character of the emotion will vary as a general thing, with changes in the intellectual perceptions. We have already noticed this fact in the volume on the Sensibilities; but it seems to be necessary, in order to have a precise and full view of the doctrine of the Will, to recur to it again. Accordingly, we proceed to say here, that all objects become more or less interesting to us, more or less radiant in the view of the mental perception, in proportion as we know more or less about them. That scenery of nature, which seemed to us exceedingly beautiful at first, will at once appear less so on the discovery of some new object, which is judged by us discordant with its general character. That exquisite picture, which charms us at the first glance, will excite still stronger emotions of pleasure, when we examine it carefully in all its parts, and discover new sources of beauty. That man of riches, who beholds his granaries and coffers with so much joy, when he sits down to reason coolly upon the true value of the wealth he possesses; when he considers that it will corrupt the morals and prove the destruction of his children, and that, in connexion with the means of its acquisition, it will arouse the

endless upbraidings of his own conscience, will be likely to find the feeling of joy withering within him, and those of sorrow and remorse taking its place. How many cases there are of moral conduct, which, on first being made known to us, have called forth the most decisive approbation ; but which, on a further examination of the motives of the actors, have changed their character, and lost all their moral glory ! How many friends have gladdened us by their countenance, which seemed to beam with a heavenly excellence, but have afterward filled us with loathing and abhorrence, when we have found that their pretended friendship was merely assumed to cloak their private views and to carry their selfish ends !

And thus it is with all objects of knowledge, as they become more fully explored either in themselves or in their relations. According as they change their aspect under the inspection of the intellect, they are invested with a new character from the emotions. But if all emotion depends essentially upon intellect, and all change of emotion depends essentially upon change of intellect, we shall hereafter have occasion to see, even more fully than has yet been pointed out, how close and indispensable the bond is which unites the intellectual to the voluntary power.

#### *§ 22. The powers of the will not perfectly correspondent to those of the Intellect*

But, although the Intellect thus lays the original foundation of the acts of the Will, we are not necessarily to infer, that there is an exact correspondence and proportion between them. In other words, we are not to infer, that the vigour of the will is always in exact proportion to

the expansion and vigour of the INTELLECT. It was a sagacious remark of the distinguished painter Fuseli, which we venture to assert a careful observation will fully confirm, that nature does not always "*proportion the will to our powers;*" meaning by the last expression our perceptive or intellective powers. "It sometimes," he adds, "assigns a copious proportion of will to minds, whose faculties are very contracted, and frequently associates with the greatest faculties a will feeble and impotent."\*— The Will appears to require, as the basis of its action in any given case, only a certain sphere of knowledge; and any amount of knowledge beyond that sphere will not necessarily affect the energy of the volitive action either one way or the other. Some instances will explain more clearly what we mean.

In Dr. Goldsmith, so justly celebrated for his various literary productions, we may notice no inconsiderable grasp of Intellect, combined with a will not fully proportioned to it. Distinguished as a poet, a comic writer, and a novelist, his conduct through life was marked with an exceeding infirmity of purpose. With a perfect understanding of the impositions of which he was made the subject, he still had not promptness and decision enough to counteract them. His biographer asserts, *that he could not give a refusal*; and being thus cheated with his eyes open, no man could be a surer and easier dupe to the impostors, whose arts he could so well describe.†

May we not also adduce the mental traits of a man still more distinguished? The intellect of Sir Isaac Newton seemed capacious enough to embrace the whole circle of knowledge; nothing among men could well exceed the

\* Cunningham's Lives of Painters, art. Fuseli.

† Scott's Lives of the Novelists, art. Goldsmith.

grasp of his understanding ; but, if we carefully compare the statements given by his biographers, we shall probably be convinced, that there was not a perfect correspondence and proportion between his intellectual and his voluntary power ; that he often exhibited no small infirmity and indecision of purpose ; a gigantic strength of thought, united with a childlike uncertainty and flexibility of action. After he had completed his great work, the *PRINCIPIA*, and had placed the new philosophical creed on an immovable basis, we are told he was unwilling to give it to the world, probably through fear of the controversies it might occasion, and that he was induced to do so through the urgent importunity of some of his intimate friends.\*—In the case of Newton, however, it may not be necessary to assert positively, as in that of Goldsmith and many others, that there was a natural deficiency or weakness of the will, since we are at liberty to attempt another explanation. The Will, like the other mental powers, strengthens by exercise, and grows languid and weak by disuse. But this great philosopher was almost constantly employed in inquiries beyond the ordinary sphere of the world's motives and actions ; and as he consequently had but little occasion for calling the voluntary power into exercise, we may well suppose that it lost in some degree its natural vigour.

§ 23. *An energetic will sometimes found in connexion with limited powers of intellect.*

And if, on the one hand, a great grasp of intellect is not always attended with a voluntary energy correspond-

\* Brewster's Life of Newton, chap. xi.—Cumberland's Memoirs, p. 9.  
—D Israeli's Curiosities of Literature, vol. ii., p. 165.

ing to it, we find, on the other, that inferiority of intellect (we do not speak now of extreme cases, but of such as are of every day's occurrence) is not necessarily accompanied with diminished power of the Will. The sphere of the will's action is of course diminished in such instances; but it is possible for it to exhibit great vigour within that limited sphere. It has but a small field to work in, (not an empire, but a small enclosure which a man can cast his eye over,) but it does its duty faithfully, promptly, and sternly in the restricted limits allotted it.

It has been remarked of the renowned Marshal Ney, that he was scarcely capable of putting two ideas together. Although this is an exaggeration, it is very certain that his great celebrity does not rest upon his comprehensive views and powers of reasoning, but almost solely on his surprising promptness and resolution in action; in other words, on the promptness and force of the will. And it is well known that the Emperor Napoleon was accustomed to speak of some of his generals, (Murat, as well as Ney, was an instance,) as men of limited intellect but of great energy; as weak and microscopic, if we may be allowed the expression, in all matters of perceptivity and reflection, but great and terrible in their volition.—But it will be necessary to resume this subject again. All that we wish to say now is, that, although there is a connexion between the understanding and the will, and the one is the basis of the life and activity of the other, there is not a perfect correspondence between the two; and that the mere power and activity of the one, since there are other things to be taken into consideration, does not furnish a perfect measure of the ability and promptness of the other.

## CHAPTER III.

## RELATION OF THE SENSIBILITIES TO THE WILL.

*§ 24. General statement in explanation of the term sensibilities.*

HAVING proceeded thus far, in considering the relation which the Understanding sustains to the Will, we advance a step further into the interior of the mental nature, and consider more particularly the relation which the Sensibilities sustain to it. We have already had occasion to remark, that the doctrine formerly prevalent of the Will's being controlled by the last dictate of the Understanding is untenable, and that the Understanding is in no case in direct contact with the voluntary power. As to any direct and immediate connexion, we have no hesitancy in saying, that they are entirely separated from each other. The space between them, however, is not left vacant, but is occupied by another portion of the mind of the greatest interest and importance, viz., its sentient or sensitive states. It is this portion of the mind, and not the percipient or intellective, which sustains a direct connexion with the Will. But, before attempting to illustrate the nature of this connexion, it is necessary to state in a few words, although at the expense of some repetition, what is properly included under the term Sensibilities.

It may be said in general terms, without professing to be specific and exact, that everything is to be included under the word Sensibilities which properly and truly im-

plies *feeling*. We suppose, moreover, that the term Sensibilities may be regarded, in its general and indefinite sense, as meaning essentially the same as the word HEART does, in those numerous passages of English writers, some of which have already been quoted, where the heart is spoken of in distinction from the head or the understanding. When we say of an individual, that he has a vigorous intellect but a perverted heart, or, on the other hand, characterize him as possessed of a just and generous heart in combination with a weak intellect, we not only have a meaning, but we rightly count on such expressions being easily and readily apprehended. We never mistake. We not only know that a part of our spiritual nature is meant, but we know what that part is. We say, therefore, in general terms, that we employ the word Sensibilities as meaning essentially the same with the word HEART. But this statement of what is meant by the term in question, it must be admitted, is so general and indefinite, that it seems necessary to designate more particularly what is included under it.

#### *§ 25. Of what are strictly included under the sensibilities.*

It is true, that the general nature of the Sensibilities, including the subordinate divisions and the relations of those divisions, has been explained at some length in the volume on that subject. But as we approach the termination of our inquiries, and come nearer to that Department, to which is assigned the high office, not only of a general control of the mental action, but of realizing and sustaining the mind's unity, so that we can truly speak of ourselves as one mind or as one person, it seems necessary, in order to a full and clear understanding of our

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position, to take a concise view of the other parts of the mind, and to point out their relations to that which is before us. This, therefore, so far as it has not been done in the remarks already made, we proceed now to do. Accordingly, we proceed to remark, that the states of mind coming under the general head of the Sensibilities may be arranged under the three subordinate classes of Emotions, Desires, and feelings of Obligation ; including under the class of the Desires certain complex states of mind, of which desire makes a prominent part, such as the APPETITES, PROPENSITIES, and AFFECTIONS.

I. Emotions.—These feelings are very various in kind, such as the emotions of cheerfulness and joy, of melancholy and sorrow, of surprise, astonishment, and wonder; the emotions of beauty, grandeur, and sublimity; the emotions of the ludicrous, and the emotions of approval and disapproval. As the emotions are simple states of the mind, it would be of no avail to attempt to define them; but the knowledge of them must be left to the testimony of each one's consciousness. But it is to be presumed, that no one is ignorant of what is meant when we speak of cheerfulness, of wonder, of melancholy, of beauty, grandeur, and the like.

II. The Desires.—Originating in the Natural in distinction from the Moral emotions, we have also the subordinate class of Desires included under the general head of the Sentient states of the mind or the Sensibilities. The knowledge of the Desires as well as of the Emotions, must be had chiefly from consciousness. No mere form of words can illustrate their nature as distinguished from that of emotions, independently of that internal experience which is implied in an act of consciousness. There are, however, some accessory or incidental circumstances,

which are in some degree characteristic of them, and which have been enumerated in the volume on the Sensibilities. For instance, the circumstance that emotions are generally evanescent, while there is a greater fixedness and permanency in the desires.—Under the class of Desires may be included, as has already been stated, the APPETITES, such as hunger and thirst; the PROPENSITIES, such as curiosity or the desire of knowledge, the innate desire of esteem, the principle of imitation, sociality or the desire of society, ambition or the desire of power, and the like; and the AFFECTIONS, both the malevolent and those of a beneficent tendency.

III. Feelings of Obligation.—To these may also be added, as belonging to and as forming a distinct portion of the Sensitive constitution, the feelings of Obligation, originating, in contrast with the desires, in the Moral in distinction from the Natural emotions. It would be inconsistent with the plan which we propose to pursue, to go very fully into the nature of Obligative or Obligatory sentiments. The difference existing between them and the Desires, will probably be obvious to every one on even a slight internal examination. Nor is there, in general, any danger of their being confounded with the Emotions, excepting those which are also of a moral nature, viz., of approval and disapproval. But here also the distinction is not an imperfect or obscure one. The emotions of approval and disapproval have reference to the character of objects and actions that are either past or present; to things that have existed in time past, or that have an actual existence at the present time, or are *conceived* to exist at the present time. The states of mind, on the contrary, which involve *obligation* and *duty*, have reference to the future; to something which is either to be

performed or the performance of which is to be avoided. They bind us entirely to what is to come.—There is also this additional ground of distinction between the two, that the feelings of obligation are always subsequent in point of time to the approving or disapproving emotions, and cannot possibly exist unless preceded by them. Accordingly, it is a common thing for a person to say, that he feels no moral obligation to do a thing, because he does not approve it, or, on the contrary, that, approving any proposed course, he feels under obligation to pursue it; language, which undoubtedly means something, and which implies a distinction between the mere moral emotion and the feeling of obligation; and which tends to prove the prevalence of the common belief, that the feeling of obligation is subsequent to, and dependant on that of approval or disapproval. These statements, though necessarily brief, will help to show what are strictly included under the term SENSIBILITIES.

§ 26. *Acts of the intellect in immediate proximity with emotions.*

In considering those states of mind which are termed SENTIENT OR SENSITIVE, in distinction from the INTELLECTIVE, we have to remark further, that of the various classes of feeling named in the preceding section, the Emotions come first in order. That is to say, in proceeding from the Intellect to the Will through the Sensibilities, which is obviously the road that nature has laid out and established to the exclusion of every other, we find the intellections in contact, or, more properly speaking, in immediate proximity, with the emotions. The first step taken from the understanding to the heart is into the region of

the Emotions, and not into that of the Desires, or of the feelings of Obligation.

And here it is proper again to observe, as we had occasion to notice in the preceding chapter, that the original and sole foundation of emotions is knowledge, which implies, of course, the action of the intellect. This is an ultimate fact in our constitution, which therefore we cannot resolve into anything else. Whenever an object of knowledge is presented before us, of whatever kind, we are so constituted that we necessarily have a correspondent emotion, either pleasing or displeasing; though in many cases, it must be acknowledged, the emotion is so very slight as to give the object the appearance of being perfectly indifferent. And even if we should admit that there may be some objects of knowledge (or, in other words, some intellectual perceptions, which amounts to the same thing) that are perfectly indifferent, being wholly unattended with emotions, it will still remain true, on the other hand, that there can be no emotions without some object of knowledge, without some preceding intellectual act. The natural progress of the mind, therefore, in bringing the Will into action, is from intellections to emotions.

Furthermore, whenever there is a clear and just perception of an object, the corresponding emotion will not only necessarily arise, but there will generally be an entire correspondence between the two. That is to say, the emotion will be the true and precise measure of the natural and moral beauty of objects, and of their deformity, and the true measure of all other qualities which are fitted to excite emotions. We say, where there is a *clear* and *just* perception, for it is undeniable that the perception is often perplexed and clouded by inexcusable carelessness,

by inordinate passion, by strong casual associations, and for other reasons; and that, in consequence of this, the correspondence which ought to exist between the emotion and the true nature of the object before the mind frequently fails. But in all those cases where there is no erroneous and unnatural influence operating on the understanding, we may reasonably expect to find a due adaptation and harmony between these two parts of our nature.

§ 27. *Emotions not in proximity with volitions.*

Acts of the understanding or intellections are, by the constitution of our nature, antecedent to EMOTIONS. But while it is thus obvious that emotions stand between intellections and volitions we are not to suppose that Emotions, although they are one step nearer the Will than the mere acts of the Understanding, are in direct contact with it, or have of themselves alone any power over it. It may be asserted with perfect confidence, if we had these feelings alone, the Will would never be brought into action. They have no more natural tendency to cause volition than mere thought, than the most unimpassioned and abstract speculations of the intellect.

Let us take some illustration. A person contemplates some picture of excellent workmanship, which appears to him beautiful or sublime, and excites within him emotions of that character; but the existence of these emotions *merely* never calls forth any act of volition. He stands, and gazes, and the tide of emotion swells in upon him, and he is overwhelmed with it. But while this portion of his Sensibilities alone is awakened and called into exercise he will remain as inactive as if he had been

formed of intellect merely. He will take no measures to possess the painting, or to do anything else in respect to it, until he is under the influence of another portion of the Sensibilities entirely distinct from emotions.

§ 28. *Emotions followed by desires and feelings of obligation.*

We behold here the admirable economy of the mind, a decisive and striking proof of that wisdom which pervades its wonderful structure. Intellectual perceptions lay the foundation of emotions, and if these last cannot reach and influence the higher and more authoritative power of the Will, it is so ordered in the mental constitution, that they lay the foundation of other mental states, which can. The classes of feelings, of which the emotions may be regarded as the basis, appear to be two in number, namely, the *Desires*, founded on the various Natural emotions, or those which give pleasure or pain; and *Feelings of obligation*, founded on the Moral emotions, viz., of approval and disapproval.

§ 29. *Desires in proximity with the will.*

And, in the first place, a word or two may be said on the position and relations of the Desires. It has been seen, that intellects are not in direct connexion with the Desires, but that Emotions intervene. The acts of the understanding alone can never raise a single desire. In no case whatever does a man assert his desire of a thing, unless he is pleased with it either in itself, or in its relations and applications. But if there be no desire without the intervention of some emotion, then it is evi-

dent that the mere knowledge of the thing, towards which the desire is directed, is not sufficient to excite it; but, on the contrary, without something more than the mere acts of the understanding, it could never exist. *The process of the mind, therefore, is from intellections to emotions, and from emotions to desires.* The intellectual perceptions lay the foundation for the various emotions both pleasant and painful; and the desires are attendant upon these. We desire a house and its furniture; we desire a picture or a statue, or other objects of convenience, utility, and beauty; because they excite emotions and give us pleasure, but not otherwise.

And if we are here asked why the emotions should lay the foundation of desires, we can only say, (as also in respect to the general fact that intellections lay the foundation of emotions,) IT IS THE CONSTITUTION OF OUR NATURE. The same creative power that requires emotions to follow the perceptions of the understanding, has instituted the succession of the desires to emotions. And it is in Desires that we find a class of immediate antecedents to the acts of the Will. They present to it a powerful motive. They furnish to it one of its broadest grounds of action.

### § 30. *Obligatory feelings also in proximity with the will.*

We may also approach the Will in another direction. The class of mental states, which are termed emotions, are followed not merely by Desires, but also by another class, distinct from Desires, and yet sustaining the same relation of proximity to the will, which, for want of a single term, we have been obliged to denominate *Feelings of obligation.* Desires are founded on the Natural emotions,

or those which involve what is pleasurable or painful, while Obligatory feelings are exclusively based on emotions of a different kind, viz., Moral emotions, or emotions of moral approval and disapproval. The Obligative states of mind, although they are easily distinguished by our consciousness from Desires or the Desirive states of mind, agree with the latter in being in direct contact with the voluntary power, and not unfrequently these two classes of mental states stand before the Will in direct and fierce opposition to each other.

We are aware that the representation has sometimes been given by writers, that the moral emotions of approval and disapproval are in direct proximity with the Will, and exert a direct control over it. But this is not true of any emotions whatever, those of approval and disapproval as well as others. They all stop short of the Will, and require the intervention of some other state of the mind. We put forth emotions in approval or disapproval of a certain action or of a certain course of conduct, but they will never lead us to exert any effort of our own until they are followed by the distinct feelings of obligation. Hence the common remark, that we feel an obligation to pursue a certain course, *because we approve it*; which implies, that, while the feeling of approval is the antecedent to that of obligation, the latter or obligative feeling is the direct and effective antecedent to volition. A view of this portion of the mind, which, we are persuaded, will bear the strictest internal examination, and will not fail to be found true.

§ 31. *Further remarks and illustrations on this subject.*

We are now able, looking at the mind in its great outlines, to understand the precise relation which its prominent parts hold to the Will. Volition is the great result, to which they all, in their appropriate position, contribute; and with which they all, therefore, sustain an established connexion, though not with the same degree of nearness.

The Sensibilities, which intervene between the Understanding and the Will, divide themselves, as was seen more particularly in the volume on that subject, into two great portions, the Natural on the one hand, and the Moral on the other. Furthermore, in accordance with this view, they approach and reach the Will, as we have just seen, in different directions and in different forms of feeling, viz., in the form of Desires or Desirive states of mind on the one side, and in the form of Obligations or Obligative states of mind on the other. They furnish, therefore, a basis for the operations of the Will, sufficiently extensive not only for the purposes of action, but of accountability.

We accordingly see, that, in the exercise of volition, men are not shut up to one form of action; but are enabled and required, in all cases where such a distinction actually exists, to discriminate between the *UTILE* and the *HONESTUM*, between the desirable and the just, between what is merely profitable or prudential, and what is virtuous. And it is undoubtedly important that these views should be borne in mind, for they have a direct and close bearing upon man's accountability, and also upon the question of his freedom. And a due degree of attention should be given to all considerations which have a tendency to settle these interesting questions.

§ 32. *Opinions of metaphysical writers on the foregoing statements.*

The doctrines, thus far advanced in this chapter, find support, in their essential and most important respects, in various writers. It is true that the distinction between desires and feelings of obligation has not been so clearly drawn and so much insisted on as it should be, although almost all writers, either more formally or incidentally, seem to acknowledge that the moral nature presents direct and powerful motives to the will, as well as those parts of our constitution which involve mere pleasure and desire. In respect to the relation sustained by desires to the will, there is more explicitness. Mr. Locke, in particular, repeatedly and clearly asserts their proximity to volition. He does indeed say, that uneasiness determines the will, (§ 31 of the Chapter on Power,) but we need not mistake how this is to be interpreted, when we remember he expressly adds, besides giving his reasons for the remark, "this uneasiness we may call, *as it is*, Desire."

And in accordance with this, we find him remarking as follows, in a subsequent section of the same chapter : "I have hitherto chiefly instanced in the uneasiness of desire, as that which determines the will, because that is the chief and most sensible, and the will seldom orders any action, nor is there any voluntary action performed, without some desire accompanying it; which, I think, is the reason why the will and desire are so often confounded. But yet we are not to look upon the uneasiness which makes up, or at least accompanies most of the other passions, as wholly excluded in the case. Aversion, fear, anger, envy, shame, &c., have each their uneasiness too,

and thereby influence the will. These passions are scarce any of them in life and practice simple and alone, and wholly unmixed with others; though usually in discourse and contemplation, that carries the name which operates strongest, and appears most in the present state of the mind: nay, there is, I think, scarce any of the passions to be found without desire joined with it. I am sure, wherever there is uneasiness, there is desire; for we constantly desire happiness; and whatever we feel of uneasiness, so much it is certain we want of happiness, even in our own opinion, let our state and condition otherwise be what it will. Besides, the present moment not being our eternity, whatever our enjoyment be, we look beyond the present, and desire goes with our foresight, and that still carries the will with it. So that even in joy itself, that which keeps up the action, whereon the enjoyment depends, is the desire to continue it, and fear to lose it: and whenever a greater uneasiness than that takes place in the mind, the will presently is by that determined to some new action, and the present delight neglected.”\*

### § 33. *Of the strength of the desires.*

While we are upon this part of the general subject, we may properly remark, as it may be found to have some connexion with what will be said hereafter, on the strength of the desires. The intensity of the desires, and also of the emotions on which they are founded, will not unfrequently vary in different individuals, even when they are acting together in reference to the same object, and nearly under the same circumstances.—The cause of this variation may be found, in the first place, in the Intellect

\* *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, book ii., ch. xxi., § 39.

or Understanding. The relation existing between the understanding and the sensibilities has already been, in some measure, explained. And those explanations will throw a ready and clear light upon the present topic. We are so constituted, as it would seem from the remarks now referred to, that the emotions we have, whether pleasant or painful, will vary, as a general thing, with our knowledge. If we happen on some occasion to be pleased with any natural or artificial object, we shall find that the pleasurable emotion will be increased or diminished by our further knowledge, either of its excellences or its defects. And as the natural progress of the mind is from the emotions to the desires, it will also happen that the strength of the desires will vary in accordance with the variation in the intensity of the emotions.

We will illustrate this by a single instance. We may assume, (and, indeed, have abundant reason to believe it to be the fact,) that the celebrated Clarkson, who was the instrument of effecting so much for suffering Africa, was naturally a person of a kindly and amiable disposition, and easily moved by exhibitions of human wo. But how did it happen, that this individual felt and effected so much in opposition to the Slave Trade, while others of equal amiability neither felt nor acted ? The explanation is an easy one, and it throws light upon the operations of the human mind. In the year 1785, the vice-chancellor of the University of Cambridge, with which Mr. Clarkson was at that time connected, gave out as the subject of a prize essay, "*Anne liceat invitos in servitutem dare?*" Is it right to enslave others against their will?" He wrote upon this subject, and gained the prize. And it was the knowledge which he acquired in writing this Essay that affected his heart; he became acquainted with facts

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which were before unknown to him, and his sensibilities were moved ; he knew, and then he felt ; he wept ver the mass of human suffering that was displayed before him, not because he was actually of a more benevolent disposition than he was the year before, or of a more benevolent temperament than a hundred others in Great Britain, but because he had become acquainted with it. And when he had known, and when he had felt new desires and new feelings of obligation enkindling within him, he saw there was nothing remaining for him but to will and to do, to resolve and to act. And from that time he devoted his useful life to Africa.

(2.) But it is necessary to add, that the mere amount of knowledge does not seem sufficient of itself to explain fully the differences of sensibility which we notice in different persons. Whatever may have sometimes been said to the contrary, there can hardly be a doubt, that the minds of men, though compacted of the same essential elements, differ from each other in the modification and exhibition of those elements, as much as the general form of their bodies and their looks differ. And if we find that there is a constitutional difference in the powers of perception, memory, reasoning, and the like, we may expect to find that there is naturally and constitutionally a greater quickness and strength of emotions and of consequent desires in some than in others. And this is confirmed by constant observation. It would certainly be deemed a very reasonable assertion, and fully confirmed by the whole course of his life, that the benevolent Howard was possessed of greater quickness and power of sensibility than many others. We do not mean to say that all he did was owing solely to the natural quickness of his sensibilities. It was undoubtedly the fact, that the

food which he furnished to the understanding nourished the sensibilities also; but it was equally true, that the sensibilities were naturally and strongly predisposed to receive such nourishment.

If these views be correct, then in endeavouring to influence a person to pursue a certain course of conduct, we must consider not only the character and value of the object which is presented before him, but the temperament of the man. The object that will bring one promptly into action, may approach heavily and weakly the more sluggish and indurated heart of another.

#### *§ 34. Of the strength of feelings of obligation.*

Essentially the same views will apply to feelings of Obligation. Like the desires, their degree of strength will vary, in the first place, with the amount of knowledge. In other words, the more fully and completely we understand a moral action in itself and in its relations, the stronger, we may reasonably expect, will be our feelings of approval or disapproval. But it has been seen, that the mere feelings of approval and disapproval never of themselves excite the Will, and lead us to action. They must be followed by Obligative states of mind or feelings of Obligation; and the strength of these last will correspond very nearly with that of the antecedent moral emotions. If the emotions be strong, and there is an opening in the matter for any personal action, the feelings of obligation, which necessarily follow them, will be proportionately strong.

But here also, as in the case of the desires, there may be a constitutional difference in individuals. As some persons appear to inherit from nature a quicker sensibility

to the beauty or deformity of natural objects than others, so in regard to things of a moral character, the emotions of some persons are found to be faint, while those of others, though there is precisely the same amount of knowledge in both cases, are distinct and vivid. And if nature may thus lay a foundation for a difference in the emotions, it necessarily lays a foundation for a difference in those feelings of obligation, of which moral emotions are the basis. Did not nature do more for the moral constitution of Aristides than for that of Alcibiades ? And was Regulus, who sacrificed his life to preserve his honour, on an equality in this respect with Cæsar, who sacrificed both his honour and his country to his ambition ?

§ 35. *Of the influence of the sensibilities on the understanding.*

Before quitting the subject of the relations sustained by the sensibilities, we have a remark further to make. The sensibilities have not only an influence onward, that is to say, upon the Will, but backward upon the Understanding. The power of the heart over the intellect has been often noticed by theological writers; nor can it have escaped the knowledge of any one, who has made the opinions and conduct of men a subject of careful observation. It is not unfrequently the case, that we anticipate, with a great degree of confidence, the decisions of a person on a purely speculative subject, from a knowledge of his desires, prejudices, and predominant passions. But the fact is so obvious and so generally acknowledged, that we have nothing to do but to say something in explanation of it.

In the first place, a knowledge of the constitution of

the human mind would lead us to expect, that the action of the intellect will not be free and unembarrassed when the sensibilities are in a state of great excitement. It has been made sufficiently clear, in this and the preceding chapters, that the tendency of the mind, in its great departments of the COGNITIVE, SENSITIVE, and VOLUNTARY, is towards consecutive rather than simultaneous action ; that its acts follow each other in a certain order in time ; that there is no feeling without antecedent cognition, and no voluntary or volitive action without the antecedent action of the sensibilities. A simultaneous action, therefore, of the intellect and of the sensibilities, in an equal degree, seems to be inconsistent with those general principles of movement, which pervade the mental constitution. Accordingly, when the intellect is at the highest point of action, the passions will be likely, at the precise moment of such high intellectual or cognitive action, to be quieted and subordinate ; and when, on the other hand, the passions are highly excited, the operations of the intellect will be perplexed, and will probably be feeble and obscure. Hence it is, that every man, when he is about entering upon an investigation of an abstract and difficult nature, is desirous of freeing himself from the disturbing forces of the heart, and of commencing his task with perfect coolness.

(2.) But there is another point of view in which this subject may be contemplated. It is not merely of the occasional predominance of the passions that the intellect may complain ; there is often a secret influence of the sensibilities, which attracts less notice, but is hardly less powerful ; which does not absolutely interrupt the exercise of the understanding, but perverts it. For instance, we often find it difficult to form a correct judgment, where

our own personal interests are concerned, or those of our family or political party. Our love has woven itself so closely around those partial interests, that even the keen eye of the understanding can scarcely penetrate its folds. And when it does, it beholds everything under a false medium ; all that is excellent, magnified and made prominent ; and all that is evil, diminished and kept out of sight. And what love has done for our own interests, jealousy and ill will and hatred have done for interests adverse to our own. These last, as well as the more amiable passions, hinder the approach of the searchings of the intellect ; and when this is no longer possible, they distort the objects of its examination.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### VOLITIONS, OR VOLUNTARY STATES OF MIND.

#### § 36. *The necessity of that controlling power which exists in the will.*

In the remarks hitherto made, although enough has been said to evince clearly the distinct existence of the Will, very little has been said in illustration of its appropriate nature. This will now be made a distinct subject of consideration. But, before entering directly upon its examination, we take this opportunity to say something of the great necessity of that regulative and controlling power, of which the will is justly deemed to be the depository.

Destitute of the power of willing, is it not evident that

man would be an inefficient and useless being ? He would indeed be possessed of the Intellect and the Sensibilities ; but it is well understood, and has already been remarked in respect to the intellect, that the value of these depends, in a great degree, upon action ; in other words, upon the practical results to which they lead. But the doctrine, that man can bring himself into action, without the power of willing, seems incomprehensible. And if we could suppose it to be otherwise, and if it were possible to try the experiment of basing human action directly upon the emotions and passions instead of the Will, it would soon show itself to be a species of action of the most perplexed and desultory kind. Like the passions themselves, it would be addicted to unforeseen obliquities, and would everywhere be characterized by indications of violence and change. No language could fully express its unfixedness, its versatility, its movements hither and thither, in various and contradictory directions. Unrestrained by any superintendent influence, the whole outward life and activity of man would be impelled blindly forward, like ships driven in storms without a rudder, or the heavenly bodies, urged onward in all their rapidity of motion, without an observance of the principles of gravitation.

It follows, therefore, necessarily, that there must be somewhere in the mind a power, which, amid the complicated variety of mental impulses, exerts a regulative and controlling sway.

The question then arises, what the internal regulative power is. And we point at once to the volitive or voluntary principle. In other words, it is the authoritative voice of the Will, which, seeing the conflict within, and calmly contemplating the claims of interest and passion

on the one hand, and of conscience on the other, pronounces the decisive and final arbitrement.

The Will, therefore, may be spoken of with some degree of propriety as the culminating point in man's spiritual nature. It sits the witness and the arbitress over all the rest. It is essential alike to action and accountability, to freedom and order and virtue. Without this, all else is comparatively nothing. It is in reference to this that all other susceptibilities keep their station and perform their functions. They revolve around it as a common centre, attracted by its power, and controlled by its ascendancy.

### *§ 37. Remarks on the nature of the will.*

Having seen that the mind is to be contemplated under the threefold aspect of INTELLECTUAL, SENSITIVE, and VOLUNTARY, and having considered the relation which the Intellect and the Sensibilities bear to the Will, we are now prepared to pass to the consideration of the precise nature of the last-named power.

And here let us interpose a word of caution. It is not to be inferred, when we speak of one part of the mind in distinction from another, and of passing from one part or power to another, that the mind is a congeries of distinct existences, or that it is, in any literal and material sense of the terms, susceptible of division. Varieties of action do not necessarily imply a want of unity in the principle from which they originate. The mental principle, therefore, is indivisible. In itself it is truly and essentially a unity, though multiplied, in a manner calculated to excite the greatest astonishment, in its modes of application. It is merely one of these modes of its application, or, rather,

one of these modes of its exercise, which is indicated by the term Will. Accordingly, the term Will is not meant to express anything separate from the mind ; but merely embodies and expresses the fact of the mind's operating in a particular way.

And hence the Will may properly enough be defined the MENTAL POWER OR SUSCEPTIBILITY BY WHICH WE PUT FORTH VOLITIONS.—And in accordance with this definition, if we wish to understand more fully what the nature of the power is, we must look at its results, and examine the nature of those states of mind which it gives rise to.—“It is necessary,” says Mr. Stewart very justly, “to form a distinct notion of what is meant by the word *volition*, in order to understand the import of the word *will*; for this last word properly expresses that *power* of the mind, of which volition is the *act*, and it is only by attending to what we experience while we are conscious of the act, that we can understand anything concerning the nature of the power.”\*

### § 38. *Of the nature of the acts of the will or volitions.*

Of volitions, which are the results of the existence and exercise of the voluntary power, we are unable to give any definition in words, which will of itself make them clearly understood. They are simple states of the mind, and that circumstance alone precludes the possibility of a definition, in any strict and proper sense of the term. It is true, we may call them determinations or decisions of the mind, or resolutions of the mind, or acts of choice, and the like, but this is only the substitution of other terms, which themselves need explanation ; and, of course,

\* Philosophy of the Moral and Active Powers, Appendix i., § 1

it throws no light upon the subject of inquiry. And hence we are thrown back upon our consciousness, as we are in all cases where the nature of the simple states of mind is the matter of investigation. And whenever we have made this appeal to the internal experience, and have received its testimony, we are then placed in the possession of all that knowledge which the nature of the case seems to admit of. And we must suppose that every one has, in some degree, done this. It is not presumable, at least it is not at all probable, that men who are constantly in action, pursuing one course and avoiding another, adopting one plan and rejecting another, accepting and refusing, befriending and opposing, all which things, and many others, imply volitional action, are still ignorant of what an act of the Will is.\*

### § 39. *Volition never exists without some object.*

Although we are obliged to depend chiefly upon consciousness for a knowledge of the nature of volitions, it is still true that we can make some statements in respect to them which may aid us in forming our opinions. Among other things, it is an obvious remark, *that every act of the will must have an object.* A very slight reflection on the subject will evince this. It is the same here as in respect to the act of thought, of memory, and of association, all of which imply some object, in reference to which the mental act is called forth.

\* It seems desirable, on some accounts, to use the term "volitional," which is analogous in its formation to the terms intellectual and emotional, and which, although not frequently used, is not without good authority. It is obvious that it is rather more definite, in its application to the acts of the Will, than the epithet voluntary. A *volitional* act is simply an act of the Will, and nothing more. A voluntary act may mean, according to the connexion in which it is found, either an act of the Will, or some act which is performed in consequence of an act of the Will.

"Every act of the will," says Dr. Reid, "must have an object. He that wills must will something; and that which he wills is called the object of his volition. As a man cannot think without thinking of something, nor remember without remembering something, so neither can he will without willing something. Every act of will, therefore, must have an object; and the person who wills must have some conception, more or less distinct, of what he wills."<sup>\*</sup>

§ 40. *It exists only in reference to what we believe to be in our power.*

Another circumstance may be pointed out in illustration of volitions, viz., *that they never exist in respect to those things which we believe to be wholly beyond our reach.* As no man believes that it is in his power to fly in the air like a bird, so we never find a person putting forth a volition to do so. As no man believes that he can originate what never had a being before; in other words, that he can create a new existence out of nothing, so we never find a man determining, resolving, or willing to that effect. Indeed, we are obviously so constituted, that, whenever we believe an object to be wholly and absolutely beyond our power, volition does not and cannot exist in respect to it. The farmer, for instance, in a time of severe drought, desires rain, but he does not will it. He is conscious of a desire, but he is not conscious of a volition. The very nature of the mind interposes in such a case, and effectually obstructs the origination of the volitive act. And this is so promptly and decisively done, and done too in all cases without exception, that we find

\* Reid's Essays on the Active Powers, Essay ii., ch. i.

it very difficult even to *conceive* of anything which we are certain is wholly beyond our power, as being an object of the will's action. There may be a desire in such cases, but there is no volition.

And the usage of language will be found to throw light on this distinction, making the term DESIRE applicable both to what is within our reach and what is not; and the term VOLITION applicable only to the former. In some cases we speak of willing or determining to do a thing, while in others we invariably limit ourselves to the mere expression of a wish or desire. Accordingly, it would comport with and be required by the usage of language, if our thoughts and conversation were directed to those matters, to say, that we determine or *will* to walk, but *desire* to fly; that we *will* to build a house, but *desire* to create a world. As has already been intimated, the structure of the mind itself seems to require the application of terms in this way. While nothing is more common than to speak of determining or willing to sail from New-York, New-Orleans, or some other mercantile place to London, no one is ever heard to speak of *willing*, but of only desiring or wishing, if such a fancy should enter his mind, to sail from those places to the Peak of Chimborazo, or to some remote planet.

§ 41. *Volition relates to our own action and to whatever else may be dependent upon us.*

Although the statements thus far made tend to throw some light upon the nature of the Will's acts, something further remains to be remarked. It does not seem definite enough merely to assert, that volitions relate solely to those things which are in our power, or are believed to be

•o. We may inquire further what is meant by being in our power, and how far the import of the phrase may justly extend itself.—And hence it is necessary to add, that volitions relate, in the first place, to our own action, either some bodily movement or some act of the mind. In saying this, however, we do not mean to say that volition is necessarily limited to the *present* action. We may will to perform something of the simplest kind, which will exact, in its execution, merely the present moment, or something of a more complicated nature, which will require no inconsiderable time. Any series of actions, intellectual or bodily, capable of being performed by us, which the understanding can embrace as one, and by means of any relations existing among them can consolidate into one, the will can resolve upon as one. So that the action, dependent upon volition, may be the mere movement of the foot or finger; or, it may be the continuous labours of a day, a week, or a year, or some long and perilous expedition by land or sea. It is just as proper to say that a man wills to take a voyage to England, as to say that he wills to put one foot before the other in stepping from his door to the street.

Volition may exist, in the second place, in respect to anything and everything which is truly dependent upon us, however circuitous and remote that dependence may be. It is proper to say that a merchant has determined or willed to fit a vessel or a number of vessels for sea, and to send them to different parts of the world, although his own direct and personal agency in the thing is hardly known. The effect of his volition, extending far beyond his own direct and personal capabilities, controls the acts of a multitude of individuals who are dependent on him. Previous to the commencement of his celebrated expedi-

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tion into Russia, the Emperor Napoleon undoubtedly brought all the objects relative to the intended expedition distinctly before his understanding ; the number and the kinds of troops, the arms and ammunition with which they were to be furnished, the means of subsistence in the various countries through which they were to pass, and the expenses incident to the arming and support of a body so numerous. The action of the intellect enabled him to assimilate and combine this vast complexity of objects into one. Although numberless in its parts and details, it assumed, as it passed before the rapid glances of his understanding, an identity and oneness, which, for all the purposes of volition and action, constituted it one thing. And, accordingly, it is altogether proper to say, that Napoleon purposed, determined, or *willed* the expedition into Russia, although the agencies requisite to carry it into effect were not lodged directly in himself, but in millions of subordinate instruments, that were more or less remotely dependent upon him. Certain it is, if he had not put forth his volition, the subordinate instrumentalities, however numerous and powerful in themselves, would never have united in and secured the result in question.

“It is not necessary,” says a recent writer in remarking upon this very subject, “to consider volition as directing merely our own physical powers. Any power, of which wealth, rank, or character gives us the command, is as truly the instrument of our will as a hand or a foot. The despot, who leads forth his armies of obsequious slaves to overthrow cities and desolate empires, as truly *wills* these events as to move a finger or change an attitude.”\*

\* *Essay on Moral Freedom*, by Thomas T. Cribbace, sect. ii.

*§ 42. Volitions involve a prospective element.*

Another mark or characteristic of volitions, by which they are distinguished from some, though not from all states of the mind, is, that they have exclusive relation to the future, to something which is to be done.—A volition is “futuritive” in its very nature ; it involves in itself, and as a part of its own essentiality, a prospective element ; it has no capacity of turning its eye backward, but always looks forward.

An intellective or perceptive act rests in itself. As soon as it assumes the form of a cognition or knowledge, it accomplishes, so far as its own nature is concerned, the mission for which it was sent. It takes its position, and there it stands ; furnishing an occasion, it is true, for other feelings to exist and to operate, but in itself remaining not only complete, but satisfied and quiescent.

But it is not so with a volition, which, from its very nature, cannot rest satisfied with the mere fact of its own existence. If we may be allowed the expression, it continually reaches forth its hand to grasp objects which have not as yet a being. In other words, it always has in view something which is to take place hereafter ; something which is to be done, the completion of which is, therefore, necessarily future. This trait is an element of its nature, or, rather, is naturally and necessarily involved in its nature, and may be regarded as one of the characteristics which help to distinguish it from the perceptive and emotive states of the mind at least, if not from others.

*§ 43. Volitions may exist with various degrees of strength*

There is one additional characteristic of volitions worthy of some notice, viz., that the volition does not always exist with the same degree of force. Undoubtedly every one must have been conscious, that the exercise of the voluntary power is more prompt and energetic at some times than others. We are aware that it is liable to be objected to this statement, that if we will to do a thing, there can be nothing less than the volition; and that it is necessarily the same under all circumstances. And it is undoubtedly true, that we never will to do an act with anything less than a volition; and that, if there be any act of the will at all, it is one truly and fully so. That is to say, the act is in all cases the same, as far as its intrinsic nature is concerned. And yet we may confidently urge, there is no inconsistency in saying that it may exist with different degrees of force.

The existence of a mental state, which is always the same in its nature, in different degrees, is not peculiar to volition. The same trait is characteristic of the mental act in all cases where we yield our assent or belief. The state of mind which we denominate BELIEF is undoubtedly always the same in its nature, but admitting of various degrees. We determine these differences of strength in the feeling by means of that same internal consciousness which assures us of the existence of the mere feeling itself. In other words, we are conscious of, or feel our belief to be sometimes weaker and at other times stronger, which we express by various terms, such as presumption, probability, high probability, and certainty. And by appealing in the same way to our consciousness

of what takes place within, we shall probably come to the conclusion that we put forth the act of volition with much greater strength at some times than others ; that at some times it is so feeble as hardly to be distinguished from a mere desire or wish, and is scarcely recognised as a volition, while at other times it is exceedingly marked and energetic.

*§ 44. Causes of the variation of the strength of the voluntary or volitional exercise.*

It may tend to throw some light on the nature of the varieties or degrees in the energy of the voluntary act, if we make a remark or two in explanation of the causes of them. We do not, however, intend to say anything here of original or constitutional differences of the voluntary power. We set that topic aside for the present, because we shall find hereafter a more suitable opportunity, where we can pursue it at length. The degree of strength in the voluntary act, considered independently of any constitutional differences which may perhaps exist, will be found to depend on various causes, two of which are particularly worthy of notice.—In the first place, as volitions cannot exist except in respect to those things which we believe to be in our power, the strength of the volition will naturally be in proportion to the strength of such belief. It has already been seen, that, where there is no belief of an object's being attainable, there can be no volition ; and we should, therefore, conclude *A PRIORI*, that the natural tendency of a diminution of belief would be to operate a correspondent diminution of the voluntary energy. Accordingly, we find it to be generally the fact, that, whenever the possibility of securing any object in

view is decidedly doubtful, the voluntary act, imbibing a sort of contagious hesitancy, becomes wavering and weak. We may, accordingly, lay it down as a general truth, that the strength of volitions will depend, in part at least, on the probability of securing the object placed before us. We do not mean to say that there is necessarily no energy of volition where one's path is hedged up with doubts and difficulties, for it is not unfrequently otherwise; but merely to assert, that the *tendency* of such doubts and difficulties is, all other things being equal, to infuse into such energy a mixture of vacillancy and lassitude. And hence it is a common artifice, if a man wishes to shake another's resolution, to represent to him the difficulties in the way of his success, and to insist on the improbability of his securing the object before him. And if we notice carefully, we shall find it to be generally true, although it may not always be the case, that a person's efforts will become enfeebled and less energetic in proportion as he yields credence to such discouraging statements. And a diminution of active efforts, of course, implies a diminution of voluntary power.

#### § 45. *Further illustrations of the same subject.*

(2.) The strength of the volition will depend, furthermore, upon the state of the Sensibilities. If, for instance, our desires are strongly directed towards a particular object, and if there be no antagonist feeling arising up to obstruct and counteract them, it may be expected that the volition will be proportionably strong. And if it happen in any given case that these strong desires are approved and aided by the feelings of obligation, the motive to action will thus be greatly increased, and the force of the

voluntary determination or resolve will be likely to be increased in proportion. And if it be the case that there is not only a concurrence of the Obligatory feelings with the Desires, but that the feelings of obligation as well as the desires are intense and energetic, it may reasonably be anticipated that the energy of the volitional act will still further be augmented.

In regard to the Sensibilities, it is enough briefly to add here, that the degree of their intensity will vary from various circumstances. Those differences of vividness and strength which we notice from time to time, may be owing to some constitutional difference in persons, as we have already, in the preceding chapter, had occasion to see. Sometimes the acuteness and vigour of the sensibilities is found to vary also from accidental causes, which cannot be easily explained. And, in particular, they will generally vary, in the intensity of their action, with the amount and character of our knowledge, conforming themselves in a great measure to the precise position, whatever it may be, of the intellect.

#### *§ 46. Of preference or indifference as applicable to the will.*

In some treatises on the Will, much is said of the will's being in a state of preference or of indifference. But it is questionable whether the terms preference and indifference are properly applicable to the Will at all. The prominent characteristic of the Will is movement, determination, or action, and not *feeling*. There is no more of feeling, no more of sensibility in the Will than in the Intellect. But every one knows that we do not apply the terms preference and indifference to the intellect; to

the acts of judgment and reasoning ; to the mere process of comparison and deduction. So far as these acts are purely intellectual, and without any tincture from the sensibilities, they are perfectly cool and unimpassioned. And one is not more so than another ; but all are unimpassioned alike. The emotion, desire, and passion, which are sometimes plausibly ascribed to them, are not to be regarded as, in any case, the components or constituents of the intellectual acts, but merely the attendants. No man says that he has a preference, or that he is indifferent, whether he shall believe the equality of the three angles of a triangle to two right ones. This is a matter where both preference and indifference, choice and refusal, are alike inadmissible. He is impelled, by the very constitution of his nature, to believe if there is evidence ; and, on the other hand, he is utterly unable to believe if evidence is wanting ; and in all cases his belief necessarily corresponds with the evidence, being greater or less in accordance with it.

But indifference and preference are equally inapplicable to the Will, although it may not be so obvious at first. A careful examination will hardly fail to convince one, that these terms are properly and emphatically applicable to the heart or sensibilities ; to that portion of our nature which is the appropriate seat of the emotions and desires, of the various forms of delight and sorrow, of love and hatred. It would naturally be expected, therefore, since the Intellect has nothing in its distinctive nature in common with the Will, and neither of them have anything in their distinctive nature in common with the Sensibilities, if indifference and preference are properly and peculiarly applicable to the Sensibilities, that they would *not* be properly and strictly applicable to the Will and

the Intellect. It belongs to the Heart to prefer, desire, or love ; or to be indifferent, to be averse from, to condemn, or hate. But the appropriate business of the Will is merely to decide, to determine, to act ; expressions which, together with many others, are applied to the voluntary power, but all with the same import.

It ought, perhaps, to be added, that these statements are made in reference to the common and well-understood meaning of the terms in question. If it could be shown that indifference implies merely a negation of action ; in other words, if it merely expresses the fact of not acting in any given emergency, then indeed we might admit that the term is applicable to the Will. But it will probably be conceded that the term is not commonly, although it is sometimes, used to express mere absence or want of action, but rather the absence or want of emotion and desire. And it is in this sense, and not in that of a mere negation of action, that we assert its inapplicability to an exercise of the Will.

## CHAPTER V.

## DISTINCTION BETWEEN DESIRES AND VOLITIONS

*§ 47. Of an objection sometimes made to the general arrangement.*

IN making the general classification of Intellective, Sensitive, and Volitional states of the mind, it is necessarily involved that we separate Volitions, which constitute the third class, from Desires, which are included in and make a part of the second. Of the correctness of this general arrangement, in its great features, we cannot permit ourselves to doubt, with the various proofs in its support which present themselves from all sides. But it cannot be denied, that, in one respect, which we now proceed to notice, it has not been perfectly satisfactory. We refer to the objection sometimes made and urged with confidence, that, although volitions may clearly be distinguished from intellections and also from emotions, they are not so easily distinguished from that portion of the Sensibilities which are denominated the DESIRES. Indeed, by some writers, and writers too of no small note and influence, they have been considered the *same* as desires; and their claim to a distinct and independent nature has been wholly rejected.

As the general arrangement which has been proposed is a fundamental one, and is absolutely essential and indispensable to a true knowledge of the Will, it is proper to attempt, not only to establish it by direct proofs in its favour, but to meet and obviate any objections which may have been made against it, whether those objections relate

to the arrangement as a whole or to any of its parts. The objection which has been referred to is one of special importance; and we shall proceed to bestow that notice upon it which its prominence claims for it. We speak of it as important, because it is undoubtedly true, that much of the obscurity which has rested upon the whole subject of our Voluntary nature has been owing to a mistake here. And obscurity will exist as long as the mistake continues. We may even assert with confidence, that the greatest minds will fail of bringing the important inquiries involved in this discussion to a satisfactory conclusion, without first fully and correctly settling this point, viz., *that the state of mind which we term VOLITION, is entirely distinct from that which we term DESIRE.*

§ 48. *Probable cause of desires and volitions being confounded.*

Before proceeding to propose our comments on the objection before us, we may properly make the remark, that it is, on the whole, not extraordinary, that this tendency to confound Volitions with the Desires should exist. We always find it difficult to separate and discriminate those things which have been long and strongly associated. Now it is well known that volitions and desires are in fact very closely united together, as antecedences and sequences. By the very constitution of our minds they go together, and are the sequents and precursors of each other. We do not mean to say or to intimate that the acts of the Will are based upon the desires alone, exclusive of every other possible motive or ground of its exercise. But it is undoubtedly true, that the desires constitute the sole antecedent causes of volition, (by which we mean

the sole grounds or occasions of volition,) in a multitude and perhaps a majority of cases. In the discharge of the common duties of life, in those every-day matters which concern what we shall eat and with what we shall be clothed, it is undeniable that we generally choose those things and pursue that course of conduct which are most pleasing and which most strongly excite our desires. In other words, our desires and our volitions go together. The one precedes, and the other follows. And, in consequence of this regular consecution, which is also for the most part very quick or rapid, (so much so, in fact, as hardly to furnish any basis for remembrance,) we gradually fall into the habit of confounding the two together, and at last come to believe that there is, in truth, no difference between them.

§ 49. *The distinction of desires and volitions asserted by consciousness.*

With the single further remark, that the tendency mentioned in the preceding section, to confound together these two states of mind, ought to be carefully guarded against, we proceed to the consideration of some things, clearly evincing the distinction between them which we maintain to exist. And the inquiry naturally presents itself here, as in respect to every other mental state, How do we obtain a knowledge of either of them ? If we consult our consciousness, which is an original and authoritative source of knowledge, we find it decisively ascribing to the desires a distinct existence, and a distinct and specific character. If we consult it again, we find it returning an answer with equal decision and clearness, that volitions too have an existence and a character equall

distinct and specific. But if consciousness asserts, in both cases, the reality of an existence stamped with a specific and distinctive character, it does not and cannot, in those same cases, assert a oneness or identity. On the contrary, it must be considered as decisively pronouncing an entire separation of the two things, however nearly they may sometimes approach each other.

And it seems proper, when we consider the difficulties that have attended these inquiries, to insist upon this testimony from within. It is exceedingly desirable that every one should reflect carefully and patiently upon the nature of Desire and the nature of Volition, as they present themselves to our internal notice in those various circumstances of enticement, and temptation, and action in which we daily find ourselves placed. Those cases, in particular, deserve notice, which not unfrequently occur where the volitions exist, and where we resolve to carry our plans into effect, in disregard of certain opposing desires which have been overruled and baffled. Has not every man had this experience? When under the influence of high moral sentiments, has he not sometimes determined to pursue a course to the disappointment of many fond wishes, of many lingering and cherished desires? Now let him recall the mental feelings and acts at such times; let him carefully reflect upon them, and will not consciousness not only clearly indicate a distinction, but even assert the impossibility of an identity in the case under consideration? We cannot entertain a doubt that it will.

## I

§ 50 *Desires differ from volitions in fixedness and permanency.*

There is one particular, on which our consciousness gives its testimony, which it is thought may be easily and clearly pointed out. Every one must have felt that our desires possess a considerable degree of fixedness or permanency ; and that they are distinguished and separated from volitions by this trait. We are able to change our volitions with great rapidity ; if we may so express it, in the twinkling of an eye. We may alter them a thousand times a day. We find them exhibiting within their allotted sphere of operation an astonishing quickness, flexibility, and variety in their movements. We make this as a general statement, without pretending that there are no exceptions.

But, while this is obviously true of the volitions, there does not appear to be the same flexibility, the same facility of movement in our desires. We may, indeed, change them after a time, and ultimately secure a greater or less degree of conformity to what we conceive they ought to be. But they are so slow in movement, so heavy and refractory in the mutations they undergo, that they remind us rather of a burden to be borne than of a living and self-operating principle.

We believe that this statement will be easily and clearly understood. Can the man who is in prison suppress in a moment and without an effort his desires to see his beloved family ? Can he who is an exile and a wanderer in a distant land easily cease to remember, and to long for the woods, and the green fields, and the mountain airs of his childhood ? Every one must know, when a desire is

once deeply implanted in the heart, how long it lingers, how hard it is to be overcome. But a fixedness of the desires in a particular direction does not necessarily imply a fixedness of the volition in the same direction. The will may be active when certain desires are immovable, because there may be other objects of desire laying the foundation of its various decisions, or there may be objects of a moral nature presenting a still higher and nobler motive. When the heart is sick, and heavy, and burdened, the purpose and high resolve may be elastic and full of energy. We feel at liberty, therefore, to assert, as a general statement, that we are not conscious of that immovability of the voluntary power, and that want of elasticity which often attend the desires. But these statements, which, we presume to say, are founded on the common experience, cannot be true if desires and volitions are identical.

¶ 51. *Further proof of this distinction from language.*

May it not also be said with a good degree of confidence, that, in the use of language, we have a further proof of the distinction between Desire and Volition? It is certainly the fact, that men commonly speak, both in their ordinary conversation and in writing, in such a manner as to imply their conviction of a distinction between mere desires or wishes on the one hand, and purposes, resolves, or determinations on the other. As this distinction, so easily and frequently observed, may be found prevalent, not in one only, but in all languages, it may well be regarded as a strong evidence of the universal consciousness on the subject. This fact has been noticed, and set in a strong light by Dr. Reid.—“Desire and Will

agree in this, that both must have an object of which we must have some conception ; and, therefore, both must be accompanied with some degree of understanding. But they differ in several things. The object of desire may be anything which appetite, passion, or affection leads us to pursue ; it may be any event which we think good for us, or for those to whom we are well affected. I may desire meat, or drink, or ease from pain ; but to say that I *will* meat, or will drink, or will ease from pain, is *not English*. There is, therefore, a distinction in common language between desire and will.”

§ 52. *Sentiments of esteem and honour often imply this distinction.*

It will further be seen, on a little reflection, that the distinction under consideration is implied in the sentiments of esteem and honour which, on various occasions, we entertain in respect to others. It seems to be the fact, that we often bestow esteem and honour on a person, because he has resisted and withstood the obvious tendency of his own inclinations or desires. We will take a very common instance, that of the confirmed drunkard. The wine sparkles before him ; his tongue and throat are parched, and the strongest desires arise. But conscience at the same time urges upon him the claims of his family, his country, and his God. After enduring this inward conflict for a season, he resolves, he wills, he acts, and dashes the alluring bowl to the ground. Every one rejoices at, and honours the deed. But it cannot be because the desire has been gratified, but because the person has willed and acted against desire ; because, in the opposing array and contest of the powers of his inferior nature, de-

sure has been beaten, and the sense of obligation and duty has triumphed by the award of the only possible umpire, viz., the Will. We evidently make a distinction, in all such cases, between the cravings of a man's appetite, which necessarily involve desire, and the act of volition, by which the tendency of such desire is counteracted.

This illustration reminds us of an additional statement of Dr. Reid on this subject.—“ With regard to our actions,” he remarks, “ we may desire what we do not will, and will what we do not desire ; nay, what we have a great aversion to. A man athirst has a strong desire to drink, but, for some particular reason, he determines not to gratify his desire. A judge, from regard to justice and the duty of his office, dooms a criminal to die, while from humanity or particular affection, he desires that he should live. A man for health may take a nauseous draught, for which he has no desire, but a great aversion. Desire, therefore, even when its object is some action of our own, is only an excitement to the will, but *is not volition*. The determination of the mind may be *not* to do what we desire to.”\*

§ 53. *Of some strictures on the foregoing remarks of Reid.*

We are not ignorant that this very passage of Dr. Reid has called forth some strictures, the object of which is to show, that its statements are in some respects defective. It has been contended, that, in the instances above adduced by Dr. Reid, the volition has reference to the muscular motion, and to that alone. In respect to the judge who pronounces the doom of his prisoner, it is

\* Essays on the Active Powers of Man, Essay ii., chap. i.

maintained by the objector that the judicial announcement is the result of *volition*, so far and so far *only* as volition puts certain muscles in motion ; and that all such acts of volition are identical in their nature with desires. And a like view is maintained to hold good of all similar cases, viz., that no volition exists except in respect to the muscular action which immediately follows, and that such volition is not different from desire. Upon views of this kind we have two remarks to make.

In the first place, if we were to admit the correctness of limiting the application of volition to the production of mere muscular motion, still it would not follow that volition and desire are identical. But, on the contrary, in regard to muscular motion, as in all other cases, we may confidently assert, that they are entirely distinct from each other, although we are ready to admit, as a general thing, that they do not stand in opposition. It is undoubtedly true, that we are sometimes liable to confound with the desires those volitions, which have no higher office than the mere regulation of the muscles, in consequence of their generally being in the same direction, and the volition being in immediate succession to the desire, and both existing perhaps in a very slight degree. Still we may safely appeal to every one's consciousness, whenever he bestows a suitable examination on the subject, whether he is not able, even in very slight instances of muscular movement, to draw a distinction between the desire and the volition. The desire to move the muscles of the foot, or hand, or throat, may have existed for minutes or hours ; but, till the volition came, there was no motion ; nor had the desire the least possible tendency to secure the motion, except through the medium of volition. A man goes from his house to his counting-room ; and it is readily ad-

mitted that he puts forth various acts of volition, that he *wills* to arise from his chair, that he *wills* to open the door of his house, to set one foot before another, and that all his muscular movements are preceded by volitions. And we may admit also that he had a *desire* to put forth these successive acts; but it does not at all follow, that the volitions were *identical* with the desires, any more than that they were identical with the various sensations and perceptions which existed at the same time. On the contrary, in all instances whatever, the distinction between the two exists, although it may be less obvious at some times than others. The desire (the same as in other analogous cases of a higher kind) is merely the forerunner and preparative of whatever is to be done; the distinct act of volition is necessary to the execution of it.

§ 54. *Volition may exist in respect to those complex acts which the mind can embrace as one.*

But we remark, in the second place, as we had occasion to show in the preceding chapter, that there may be volition in respect to combined action and plans of action, as well as in respect to single acts. He, who supposes that volition is exercised solely and exclusively in reference to the motion of the muscles, must have a very inadequate notion of the sphere in which this part of the mind is called to operate. This view will seem the more admissible when we consider that we have it in our power to give a mental unity to actions, which, as they are successively brought to their fulfilment, are many, and are distinct from each other. It is presumed that the existence of this ability will not be denied. Dr. Brown himself, in whose writings the strictures on the views of

Dr. Reid are found, acknowledges that we can give a unity in our conception to things which are complex. "In considering," he remarks, "the physical changes which come under our view, it is impossible for us, in many cases, not to give a sort of *unity*, in our conception, to phenomena which are in their nature complex. We consider them as in some measure *one*; because, however complex they may truly be, they exhibit to us one great general character."\* And we may add, that we are capable of giving a unity to moral objects of whatever kind, as well as to physical, if there be any possible relation of time, or place, or resemblance, or effect, or cause, which the mind can detect and employ as a ligament for this purpose. We repeat, that this capability of combining, by a mere mental act, many into one, of converting multiplicity into unity, is not less true of intellectual and moral objects and facts than of physical; and in many cases both are included.

A man, for instance, contemplates going a journey; he examines all the circumstances which may have a bearing on his proposed expedition; and combines, by the various operations of the intellect, the whole into one view. This complex object is addressed, not in its parts, but as a whole, to the sensibilities. It excites the various forms of desire, and the feelings of obligation; and these are followed by volition. In all cases of this kind the mind is capable of acting, and, in point of fact, it generally does act, in reference to the whole object. The volition may be in accordance with the desire or not; it may be in accordance with the moral feelings, and wholly at variance with the desires; but in both alike the desires and volitions are distinct. And these views hold good

\* Relation of Cause and Effect, part i., § 3, pt. ii., § 3.

not only in the case just now remarked upon, of the man who dashes from him the intoxicating bowl, but of the judge who is called, in the discharge of his duties, to pass sentence of death on an accused person. He undoubtedly takes into view the action in its whole extent, in all its results. As it exists in the view of his intellect, it is *one* action, though made up of various subordinate parts ; and the question, placed distinctly before him and subject to his own dispensation, is one of life and death. And we may assert with confidence, the true state of his mind in ordinary cases is, that he *desires* the accused person to live, but *wills* him to die ; and that the desire and volition are not only distinct from each other, but are opposed to each other. The fact is, there are two conflicting principles within him, the desires on the one hand, and the feelings of moral obligation on the other. These both are in immediate contact with the will ; that is to say, have a direct influence upon it. In acting in conformity with the moral motive, he acts against the desire ; and an act which is against desire, whether that action be mental or bodily, cannot with any propriety of terms be said to be identical with it.

§ 55. *If the distinction in question do not exist, the foundation of morals becomes unsettled.*

There is another and important point of view in which this subject may be considered.—It is presumed that the reader will be disposed to admit the existence and the great practical utility of that department of our nature, which we variously denominate either the moral sense or the conscience. But if conscience is of any value, it is because the feelings of obligation resulting from it furnish

a motive to volition, and become, at times, its antecedent and necessary; or, rather, its prerequisite condition; and because the motive thus furnished is different from that presented by the appetites, propensities, and passions. But if volition is always and invariably identical with some form of desire, then it is obvious that conscience is excluded, and that nothing can be more unmeaning, and useless, and delusory than the apparatus of moral emotions and of feelings of obligation, which so evidently exists. They furnish, on that supposition, a mere show of authority, without any actual good results. So that we have great reason to assert, that the doctrine, which makes volition always and necessarily identical with the highest desire, tends to annihilate our moral nature. If we are not erroneous in our construction of it, it places man, in a moral point of view, on the same footing with brute animals.

We never condemn a brute that yields to its desires as guilty of a crime. And why not? Because it has no conscience, no moral sense; and, of course, there is no basis of its actions except in its desires; and therefore, in acting in accordance with its desires, it acts in conformity with its nature, and fulfils the destiny allotted it. But certainly it is not so with man, however it may be with the lower animals. Man has within him not only desires, but feelings of moral obligation; he appreciates not only what is good, but what is right; and if ever, in any assignable case, he wills and acts in accordance with his moral feelings, and in opposition to his desires, then his volitions and desires are not the same

*§ 56. Instances in illustration of the distinction in question.*

We think we might bring many instances of a practical kind to illustrate the distinction under consideration, and which not only illustrate, but tend to prove its existence. The parental relation will furnish to those, at least, who have experienced the strength of affection incident to it, an illustration of the matter before us. The tenderly beloved child commits some fault or crime, under such circumstances as to render him inexcusable, and the father punishes him. Every father knows that the infliction of punishment in such cases is attended with a war in his own bosom; the strong feeling of obligation, which an enlightened conscience has laid the foundation of, drawing him one way, and the yearnings of parental affection enticing him another; and it does not appear that anything can still this commotion, and secure the supremacy of his moral nature, but the energetic and authoritative effort of the will.

Let us apply these views to the case of the patriarch Abraham, when he was called, in the administration of the Divine Providence, to offer up his son Isaac amid the forests of Mount Moriah. Will any one presume to say that, when the aged father stood with his knife extended over the bared bosom of his only son, there was no contest within him, no earnest and almost overpowering longing for his rescue? Did not his affection kindle with tenfold ardour when his beloved boy asked him, with the simplicity of untaught and confiding childhood, Where is the lamb for the burnt offering? While desire for the child's safety existed at the highest point of intensity, there were other high and sacred principles of action;

and, in view of them, the power of volition, collecting all its strength, smote through the tumultuous torrents of affection, as the rod of Moses divided the troubled waters of the sea.

### § 57. *Other instances in illustration of proof.*

Such instances abound in all periods of history, profane as well as sacred; and particularly in Roman history. The reader of Roman history will recollect, that when the sons of Lucius Junius Brutus conspired against the Roman republic, and the conspiracy was discovered, they were condemned to die. It became the duty of the father, who was at that time at the head of the Commonwealth, to see the punishment enforced. Can any one doubt that there was a strife, a contest, in the soul of the patriotic Roman? The historian informs us that this struggle was visible in his countenance, (*eminente animo patrio inter publicæ pœnæ ministerium,*) as he stood at the dreadful scene of the execution. But if desire and volition are the same thing, where was the foundation for such inward contest? If the desire was coincident with the volition; if the latter was lost and absorbed in the former; and if his conscience approved of the transaction as it did, then there must necessarily have been a calm within and without; there could not possibly have been an agitation, dissidence, and rending asunder of the interior nature.

There is another instance in Roman history not less affecting than this. During the fatal period of the Roman decemvirship, certain transactions took place, which, while they agitated the whole city of Rome with sentiments of grief and indignation, infused the deepest horror and de-

spair into the heart of a worthy father. His affections were bound up in a beloved daughter, who was insidiously assailed by one of the most powerful magistrates, in a manner which left no hope of deliverance. In this situation, seeing his daughter exposed to unavoidable and unspeakable infamy, he seized the knife of a butcher, and plunged it into her bosom. And is it possible for us to say, with any propriety of language, that Virginius *desired* the death of his daughter? The whole history of the transaction shows that he doted upon her with all the depth and sacredness of parental love. The assertion, therefore, is incredible. He could not have *desired* it; human nature spurns the thought as an impossibility; and yet he too fatally *willed* it. He considered her life as but dust in the balance in comparison with the loathsome degradation which was so cruelly threatened by one whom he had no power to resist; and in putting her to death, not from desire, but from the sentiment of duty, he willed and executed what at the same time he lamented and abhorred as in itself a most terrible and overwhelming calamity.

§ 58. *Proofs drawn from some facts in the constitution of the mind.*

At this point in the argument we proceed to remark, that there is one interesting psychological or mental fact, which has probably never been brought into the discussion, but which seems to us decisive of the point at issue. We refer to the fact that, whenever the object of a morally obligative feeling on the one hand, or of a desire on the other, is secured, there is always, by the very constitution of our nature, an attendant emotion of pleasure; in other

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words, an internal realization of happiness. When in any given case one of these impulsive mental elements, viz., desires and obligative sentiments, is gratified, and the other is not gratified, it is true, that the accompanying sense of pain on the disappointed part may counterbalance, and more than counterbalance, the attendant pleasure on the other. So much so, that we may not always have a distinct perception of the pleasure. Nevertheless, the great psychological fact, which is involved in the very constitution of our nature, will be found, on examination, to remain sure.

Now let us apply this view to some of the cases which have been introduced, to the judge who has sentenced a prisoner to death ; to Abraham when he was about to offer up Isaac ; to Brutus when he presided at the execution of his children ; to Virginius when he plunged the dagger into his daughter's bosom, and any other similar instances.

We are to notice, in the first place, that the moral sentiment or conscience approved what they did. So far all was right ; and they undoubtedly had the satisfaction which always and necessarily attends the doing of a conscientious action. Now if you make desire and volition the same thing, it will follow that they not only did what they felt they *ought* to do, but that they did *also* what they *desired* to do. The desirive feeling, as well as the moral or obligative feeling, was gratified.

Consequently, you must add to the degree of happiness already existing that additional degree of happiness which naturally arises from the gratification of desires. Not only this ; every source of sorrow (for obviously there can be no sorrow where the doing of right coincides with our desires) must have been shut up, so far as these particular transactions were concerned, and entirely

excluded. These persons, therefore, instead of being bowed down with grief, and the objects of the deepest compassion, must have been not only entirely calm, but happy in the very highest degree. To have inflicted a dagger upon a beloved child must have been, under these circumstances, a sort of holyday amusement. No tear could have started from their eyes, no shade of sorrow could have dimmed their brows ; but, on the contrary, they must have been as happy as virtue, combined with the fulfilment of their own desires, could have made them.

But it is unnecessary to say, that this view is wholly at variance with the facts. And this is not all. Human nature itself revolts at the mere statement. And we do not hesitate to assert, in view of the facts which have been given and others like them, that the philosophy which makes desire and volition identical, never has explained and never can explain the exhibitions which human nature constantly presents.

§ 59. *Of the chastisements of the Supreme Being inflicted on those he loves.*

There is one consideration more.—May we not draw light down upon this subject from an observation of the course which our adorable Creator takes in his dealings with his creatures ? Throughout the Holy Scriptures we find expressions which indicate the strongest love towards them, when, at the same time, he is compelled to inflict his chastisements. The Old Testament is full of expressions of kindness and tenderness towards his ancient people. “ He nourished and brought them up as children ;” “ he led them about, instructed them, and kept them as the apple of his eye.” In their rebellions

ne calls after them with unspeakable affection. "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim ? How shall I deliver thee, Israel ? How shall I make thee as Admah ? How shall I set thee as Zeboim ? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together !" But, although he loved them with all the intensity of a father's affection, still the eternal principles of his nature compelled him to exercise his benevolence in subordination to the sentiments of justice. When his people rebelled, and did not listen to his warnings, he gave them over to dreadful punishments. He poured upon Israel the fury of his anger, the strength of battle, and set him on fire round about. But, although he *willed* the wasting, and desolation, and sufferings of his people, (for he says, "who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers ? Did not the Lord ?") we do not feel at liberty to say that he *desired* it, for everything in the Old Testament shows that it greatly grieved him.

And who does not recollect the affecting language of the Saviour, uttered over the Holy City ? "Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killst the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee !" And yet soon afterward the sign of the Son of man appeared in heaven ; the sun and the moon were darkened ; the earth mourned ; there was famine, pestilence, and earthquake ; of the beloved and beautiful Temple not one stone was left upon another ; and all Jerusalem, that delight of the whole earth, was bathed in blood and wrapped in fire.—Not because the Saviour had ceased to love it, and to desire its good, but because the measure of its iniquity was full, and the dictates of eternal justice compelled him to *will* and to inflict a punishment which a being so infinitely benevolent could never have *desired* to see.—And does he not, at

this moment, truly desire the return and salvation of every sinner ? Does he not earnestly entreat them ? And when he shall inflict on these same sinners unutterable chastisements on account of their obduracy, will it be because he ceases to love, or because immutable justice requires it ?

On this subject we cannot refrain from adding, in unfeigned sincerity, that sound philosophy requires the Bible to be understood as it stands, in its obvious import, and as it would be interpreted by an unlettered reader. In the great outlines of his mental constitution, it is strictly and emphatically true, as Scripture informs us, that man is formed in the image of his Maker. And it is as true of God as of man, that there are elements in his nature which lead him to determine or will that which He does not desire. It neither is nor can be true of God, that He ever *desires* the infliction of punishment, though the obduracy of transgressors often leads him to *will* it. To desire the infliction of misery in any way whatever, in the strict and original sense of the word *desire*, is the characteristic of an evil, and not of a good being. It is the height of impiety to attempt to pervert the often repeated and earnest expressions of the Supreme Being on this subject. “As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his ways and live.”

#### § 60. *Objected that these views lead to contradictions.*

If it were deemed of consequence enough, we might stop here to consider some objections, chiefly of a verbal kind, of which it will, perhaps, answer all purpose to notice one that may serve as a specimen of others. It being assumed that every act of desire implies a preference or

choice, and it being further said, in way of definition, that volition is the act of choosing, we are then confronted with the obvious contradiction, that, if the volition is ever actually opposed to the desire, we choose what we do not choose, &c. This objection, perhaps a plausible one in the minds of some, will be found, on examination, to resolve itself into a verbal fallacy, and naturally vanishes as soon as that fallacy is detected.

It is well known that, owing to the imperfection of language, we not unfrequently apply the same term to things which, both in their nature and relations, are different from each other. Now it is undoubtedly true that the common usage of language authorizes us to apply the terms choice and choosing indiscriminately to either the desire or the volition; but it does not follow, and is not true, that we apply them to these different parts of our nature in precisely the same sense. We sometimes use the word choice when it obviously implies and expresses desire; and the desire in this case differs from desire in other cases, not in its nature, but only in the circumstance that it is a desire which predominates over other desires existing in reference to other conflicting objects brought before the mind at the same time. That is to say, when the word choice implies desire at all, it has reference to a number of desirable objects brought before the mind at once, and implies and expresses the ascendant or predominant desire. It is that particular desire, in distinction from others, which we denominate our *choice*.

At other times we use the term choice or choosing in application to the will; but, when we do so use it, we are to regard it as modified by the nature of the subject to which it is applied. The choice of the will is the same as the decision of the will; and the decision of the will

is the same as the *act* of the will. The word in question, then, when it is applied to that power, expresses the mere act of the will, and nothing more, with the exception, as in the other case, that more than one object of volition was present in the view of the mind before the putting forth of the voluntary act. In fact, it is the circumstance that two or more objects are present which suggests the use of the word choice or choosing in both cases; but we are not at all to suppose that the use of the word implies or involves a change in the nature, but only in the condition or circumstances of the mental act. The acts are entirely different in their nature, although, under certain circumstances, the same name is applied to them. When they are both called choice or acts of choice, they are indeed verbally, but not really, identical. If these views are correct, (and we believe they be,) then the contradiction spoken of, whenever it takes place, is not a real, but merely a verbal one. If we ever choose against choosing, it will be found to be merely that choice which is volition, placed in opposition to that choice which is desire; a state of things which, as we have already seen, not unfrequently exists, and in which there is no incompatibility.

#### § 61. *Opinions of Mr. Locke and others on this subject.*

We shall close this chapter with remarking, that the distinction in question is more or less clearly recognised and sustained by a considerable number of writers, whose opinions, as they were given on mature deliberation, are entitled to great weight, particularly Mackintosh, Reid, Good, Stewart, and Bockshammer among others. At an earlier period Mr. Locke also took the same ground in the following passage, which we commend to the consid-

eration of the reader.—“ I find the will often confounded with several of the affections, especially desire, and one put for the other ; and that by men who would not willingly be thought not to have had very distinct notions of things, and not to have written very clearly about them. This, I imagine, has been no small occasion of obscurity and mistake in this matter ; and therefore is, as much as may be, to be avoided. For he that shall turn his thoughts inward upon what passes in his mind when he wills, shall see that the will or power of volition is conversant about nothing but that particular determination of the mind whereby, barely by a thought, the mind endeavours to give rise, continuation, or stop to any action which it takes to be in its power. This, well considered, plainly shows that the will is perfectly distinguished from desire, which, in the very same action, may have a quite contrary tendency from that which our will sets us upon.”\* Mr. Stewart, as has already been intimated, takes similar views. Such is the characteristic and almost extreme caution of this distinguished writer, that any opinion which he deliberately hazards is entitled to great consideration. Upon the subject now under discussion, he has the following remark : “ There is a state of mind, perfectly distinct both from the power and the act of WILLING, with which they have been frequently confounded, and of which it may, therefore, be proper to mention the characteristical marks. The state I refer to is properly called DESIRE.”

\* *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, book ii., ch. xxi.

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## PART II.

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### LAWS OF THE WILL

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## CHAPTER I.

### LAWS OF THE WILL IMPLIED IN THE UNIVERSALITY OF LAW

§ 62. *The preceding chapters preparatory to what follows.*

THE remarks that have been made in the First Part of this Work relate to the General Nature of the Will. It seemed important to take this general view. It was obviously necessary, before entering into the examination of the long-contested topics that are to follow, to review and settle the subject, although at the expense of repeating some things said in another place, of the great outlines of the mind in its departments of the INTELLECTIVE, SENSITIVE, and VOLITIONAL. It seemed especially necessary, when we consider the mistakes that have prevailed upon that point, to assert and maintain the distinction existing between Desire and Volition. Nor was it enough to inquire into those things which distinguish the Will from the other great mental departments. It seemed to be requisite also to indicate briefly some particulars which are especially characteristic of it, and which contribute to constitute its essential and distinctive nature. In looking back upon what has been brought forward, we indulge the hope, perhaps, however, without sufficient foundation, that some doubts have been cleared up, and some principles satisfactorily established. The remarks thus necessarily made may indeed appear to have been protracted to an inordinate length; and we can only say in reply, if such is thought to be the case, that they were rendered as concise

as seemed consistent with any adequate notice of the numerous topics that have come under review.

And it seems to come in place to add here, that in everything which has been said there has been an object. Every part of this Treatise will be found to be more or less connected with other parts ; and, perhaps, more closely than would at first seem probable. And accordingly, the doctrines and principles which have been brought forward, and more or less elucidated and established, are introductory to three distinct series of views of great interest in themselves, as well as of great practical importance, having relation respectively to the LAWS, the FREEDOM, and the POWER of the Will. These leading topics will be successively considered.

### *§ 63. Of the importance of the topics now entered upon.*

In examining the matters of inquiry which are to follow, particularly the Laws and the Freedom of the will, we presume to say that we have a claim on the strict and candid attention of the reader. While few questions present themselves to one's notice of greater interest than these, a regard to historical truth requires it to be added, that on few has there been a greater difference of opinion. These inquiries, moreover, which lie so closely at the root of human accountability, are as important as they are interesting, not only in a speculative point of view, and as presenting complicated and difficult problems for solution, but also on account of their practical results. If a man, for instance, adopts the opinion that there is no such thing as freedom of the will, and that men are the subjects of an irresistible fatality, it will generally follow that his practice will be correspondent to such a belief. Placing

an erroneous interpretation on the words of Solomon, that “time and chance happen to all men,” such persons throw themselves upon the wave of their destiny, and are floated onward with an utter disregard of the issue, whether it be good or evil, shameful or glorious. No matter what takes place, say they ; it is all from a higher power ; and it would be wholly ineffectual and presumptuous in mere insects to prescribe plans for the Deity. The greatest circumspection, the most arduous labours, the most invincible determination, will effect nothing against the allotted and predestined course of events. Philosophers may speculate, and political cabinets may lay their plans ; but, after all, the fate of Europe may depend, as it has once depended, upon a dispute about a pair of gloves, or some other trivial circumstance which happens to form a link in the unalterable chain of destiny.\*

On the other hand, if a person fully believes that all things are in his own power, in the sense of excluding a wise and efficient superintendency, it leads to a presumptuous self-confidence altogether unsuitable and dangerous. Puffed up with an unwarrantable self-conceit, he does not feel the need of asking aid from on high ; he does not conform his conduct to the indications of Divine Providence ; but lays his plans, and attempts their execution, wholly in his own strength.

These respective systems, when adopted to the exclusion of other views which might control and modify them, may justly be pronounced false and dangerous ; as inconsistent with sound philosophy as they are with private duty and the general good ; although it is undoubtedly true, that in all ages of the world they have been made the governing principle of multitudes. We are authorized,

\* See the Prince of Machiavel, ch. xxv., and Examen du Prince.

therefore, in saying, that the particular subjects on which we now propose to enter are very important, in a practical point of view. It will be our desire to examine them with that care and candour which their practical importance demands; and, without any undue expression of confidence, we would indulge the hope of placing them in a light at once consistent with the claims of God and the responsibilities of man.

*§ 64. The inquiry, whether the will has its laws preliminary to that of its freedom.*

In order to approximate the true notion of the Freedom of the WILL, an inquiry which will receive particular attention in its place, it seems proper to attempt the settlement of a preliminary question, viz., *whether the will is subject to laws.* If it be true, as we shall introduce some considerations to show, that the Will has its laws, then the freedom of the Will, whatever may be its nature, must accommodate itself to this preliminary fact. We will assume here that the Will is free; we have no disposition to dispute the correctness of that view; undoubtedly its freedom is susceptible of ample demonstration; but if there be other mental facts equally demonstrable, then it follows that the freedom of the Will must exist in accommodation to such other facts, and can be such a freedom, and such only, as is consistent with them. This, it would seem, is a very obvious view; and hence it is exceedingly important that this point should be settled first. It will, accordingly, now be our object to propose certain considerations to show that **THE WILL HAS ITS LAWS.**

*§ 65. Everything throughout nature has its laws.*

In entering upon the question whether the Will has its laws, may we not reason, in the first place, from the general analogy of nature? If the universe is everywhere legibly inscribed and written over with the great truth, that all things are subject to law, are we not furnished with a strong presumption that we shall not discover an exception in any part of man's mental nature? As to the alleged fact on which we base this presumption, there can be no doubt of it.—Let us look, in the first place, at material things. The parts of the earth are kept in their relative position by the operation of some fixed law; the various immense bodies, composing the system to which the earth belongs, are made to revolve in obedience to some unalterable principle; there is not even a plant, or a stone, or a falling leaf, or a grain of sand, which can claim an exemption from regulation and control. And what is true in these few instances, is true in all. No certain and undoubted exception can be found.

And this great truth holds good also of things which have life and intelligence. Objects of a spiritual or mental nature (if not in precisely the same sense in which the assertion is applicable to matter, yet in some true and important meaning of the expressions) have their appropriate and determinate principles of being and action. There may, indeed, be some things which are as yet unexplainable by man; there may be some objects of knowledge, to the full understanding of whose nature limited human reason cannot as yet reach; but still the vast majority of objects, coming within the ordinary range

of our inspection, obviously tend to found and to foster the general conviction, that there are laws wherever there are existences, whatever the kind or nature of the existence.—There is, therefore, undoubted truth in the remark of Montesquieu, with which he introduces his great work on the Spirit of Laws, where he says, after some suggestions on the meaning of the term, “all beings have their laws, the Deity his laws, the material world its laws, the intelligences superior to man their laws, the beasts their laws, man his laws.”

§ 66. *Reference to remarks of Cicero on the universality of law.*

The mention of Montesquieu, a name equally dear to literature and to liberty, naturally suggests the recollection of some men of a kindred genius. The idea of the universality of law has ever been familiar to minds that were particularly distinguished for expansiveness of thought and for philosophical sagacity. They seem to have seized upon this great truth intuitively; not by the slow deductions of reasoning, but by a sort of instinct of intellect. The illustrious orator of Rome, among others, asserts the existence of a law which has its foundation in nature, and which is universal, uniform, and eternal. He declares God to be the author of it; and adds, that no man can exempt himself from its control without fleeing from himself, and without putting off and alienating his own nature. It is of this law and in connexion with these statements that he employs those celebrated expressions, “nec erit alia lex Romæ, alia Athenis, alia nunc, alia posthac, sed et omnes gentes et omni tempore una lex et sempiterna et immortalis continebit, unusque erit commu-

nis quasi magister et imperator omnium Deus.”\* No person who examines the whole of this remarkable passage with care, will fail to perceive, that its author had in his conceptions the idea of a great central Power, possessed of perfect wisdom and justice, from whom emanates a paramount and controlling influence, which is binding upon nations as well as individuals, which extends to all parts of his dominions, making one of many, and harmonizing them all by requiring them to act in subjection to himself.

*§ 67. Reference to remarks of Hooker on the universality of law.*

We cannot forbear introducing here, as in accordance with the sentiments of this chapter, the memorable expressions of Hooker, although at the risk of repeating what may already be familiar to the reader. “Of law, no less can be said than that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world; all things in heaven and earth do her homage, the very least as feeling her care, the greatest as not exempted from her power; both angels and men, and creatures of what condition soever, though each in different spheres and manner, yet all with uniform consent admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy.”†

We cannot agree with those, if such there are, who may be disposed to set down this sublime passage as a species of rhetorical exaggeration, an instance of well-selected and sounding language, rather than of well-adjusted thought; but would rather regard it as the expression

\* Cicero, *De Republica*, lib. iii.

† Hooker’s *Ecclesiastical Polity*, book i.

of a reality, uttered on the most sober consideration ; a reality perhaps not perfectly visible and obvious to minds of very limited expansion, but of which undoubtedly the learned and eloquent writer had a clear and impressive perception. The train of thought which pervades the passage is obviously identical with that of Cicero. It involves and indicates the sublime truth, that law, the great bond of the Universe, finds its origin and support in the bosom of the Deity, and is, in its basis or elements, co-substantial with his nature ; and going forth from that primitive and prolific centre in every possible direction, like rays from the sun, embraces, harmonizes, and controls every form and modification of being, whether intelligent or unintelligent. And how full of grandeur and of consolation is the thought ! If we could suppose that even a single unintelligent atom had broken loose from the infinite ramifications of the great principle of unity, which is only another name for that law which binds one existence to another, and both to a third, and all to the great central and superintendent Power, it would not fail to fill us with misgivings and anguish. The doctrine of the universality of law, which is the same as the universality of power under the guidance of fixed principles, recommends itself to the heart as well as the understanding, and dispenses happiness while it controls conviction. Is any one prepared to say that he is not rendered happy in the recollection that God is around us and in us ? Is it not a source of consolation, that his paternal eye rests for ever upon our path ; that he knoweth our lying down and rising up, our going out and coming in ? And that while he superintends the minutest actions and events pertaining to ourselves, He extends abroad, amid the num-

berless varieties of existence, the watchfulness of his pervading control,

" And fills, and bounds, connects and equals all ?"

**§ 68. *The universality of law implied in the belief of a Divine existence.***

The idea of a God necessarily embraces and implies the notion of the universality of law. Many of those nations, that have not been favoured with the light of Revelation, have maintained the doctrine of a Supreme Power. The human mind is so constituted, and is located under such a variety of influences favourable to such a result, that the idea of a God, though sometimes wholly obstructed by peculiarly untoward circumstances, naturally develops itself with a greater or less degree of strength. The most savage nations, if it be too true that they are apt to forget Him in their prosperity, seek to propitiate Him in the day of sorrow. They generally have a conviction, indistinct indeed, but not the less real, that a Deity is present; that there is some possible mode of communication between Him and men; that the virtuous are the objects of his favour, and the vicious of his displeasure; "*pro se quisque, Deos tandem esse, et non negligere humana, fremunt.*"\* But with him who enjoys the communications of the Divine Word, the conjectures, which are furnished by the light of nature, are exchanged for a cheering certainty which can never be shaken. This high and inscrutable Being made all things; he not only framed the world and all things therein, and ordained the moon and the stars, but he also holds in his hands the hearts of the children of men, and turns them whitherso-

\* Livy, lib. iii., cap. lvi.

ever he will. He is not only unlimited in power, but wholly unrestricted and boundless in knowledge, and supreme in the administration of his government. To deny either the one or the other, either his omniscience, or his almighty ness, or the supremacy of his administration, would be nothing less than to dethrone Him from his place in the universe, and virtually to deny his existence as Deity. As has been remarked, the idea of a God, possessed of such transcendent attributes, (an idea which is not only proposed and fostered by Revelation, but is the natural and necessary product of the human mind, except in those few cases where it is repressed and annulled by peculiar circumstances,) necessarily embraces and implies the notion of the universality of law.

The doctrine that there is anything whatever which is truly and entirely exempt from every species of oversight and control, is altogether inconsistent with the recognition of the existence of a Supreme Being. If there is a God, there is a universal law. Can that power properly be called omnipotent, within the sphere of whose operations there are objects which are entirely exempt from its supervision and control? Can that wisdom properly be called omniscient, which knows not what will be the determinations and acts of men in all assignable circumstances, in all time and place? Can that government be, with any propriety of language, denominated a Supreme government, within whose limits there are agents who are not reached and bound by any of those ties, even the feeblest of them, which operate to unite the circumference to the centre, and to combine and assimilate the multiplied parts under one common head? We must repeat it, therefore, if there is a God, there must be a law, which is, in the strict sense of the word, **UNIVERSAL**.

§ 69. *A presumption thus furnished in favour of the subjection of the will to law.*

It is not necessary to pursue this subject, when contemplated under this general form, at much length. What has been said will answer our present purpose. If the doctrine of the universality of law be tenable, what shall we say of the Will? Does not the position, that the Will is not subject to laws, imply an anomaly in the universe? Whatever is not under some sort of control, but is entirely irregular, contingent, and exempt from all conditions, is necessarily irresponsible to the supervision of anything, even God himself. We have, then, an exceedingly strong presumption, when we look at the subject in the most general light, in favour of the proposition that the Will has its laws. Especially when we consider the relation which the Will sustains to the other powers; that its action constitutes the great result to which the operation of the other parts of our nature tends; in other words, that, in all cases of movement or exertion, the volition is the consummation of all the other mental acts, and, in effect, represents the whole mind. If the Will acts contingently, then the *man* acts contingently; and while he retains this alleged specific character of acting in this way, he is not only free from all law, thus destroying that peace and joy of which Hooker asserts her to be the mother, but he cannot be controlled even by the Deity. He has suffered a revulsion from the parent stock; he has gone off and set up for himself; he has established an empire of his own, where even the Most High must not enter; a state of things which certainly finds no parallel among the other existences, powers, and intelligences of the universe,

and which is rebuked alike by the conclusions of reasoning and by the suggestions of virtue.

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## CHAPTER II.

### LAWS OF THE WILL IMPLIED IN MORAL GOVERNMENT.

#### § 70. *Of the existence of a moral government.*

Now let us turn our attention from these interesting but general considerations, which have especial relation, it will be noticed, to what may be called NATURAL law and the NATURAL authority of the Supreme Being, to those leading principles which we suppose to pervade his MORAL government. And which not only pervade and are essential to the Divine government, but to all moral government, by whatever superintendence it may be administered.

Accordingly, it is our design, in the present chapter, to bring reasons to show, that the doctrine of the Will's subjection to law is necessarily implied in the fact of MORAL GOVERNMENT. And the argument will apply equally well, as has been intimated, whether the Moral Government under consideration be regarded as divine or human. We, of course, assume in the argument, that we are reasoning with those who fully believe and admit that Moral Government exists, and that men are subjects of it. Certainly there is ample evidence that such is the case, independently of what is taught on the subject in Revelation. The light of nature clearly and strikingly indicates

that a moral government, extending its authority over the human race in particular, has an existence. "Mankind," says Bishop Butler, who has investigated this subject with his acknowledged ability and candour, "find themselves placed by God in such circumstances as that they are unavoidably accountable for their behaviour, and are often punished, and sometimes rewarded under his government, in the view of their being mischievous or eminently beneficial to society."\* Revelation, whatever may be the clearness or obscurity of the indications of unaided nature, places the existence of such a moral government beyond all doubt. We suppose, therefore, the fact of such a government to be admitted.

*§ 71. Laws of the will deducible from the first principles of moral government.*

If a moral government exists, as is assumed to be the fact, and is known to be so, then it has its first principles or elements. It must, of course, have its predominant traits, its distinctive characteristics, some admitted and essential truths. If these traits or principles are assented to, they must obviously be assented to with such consequences as may fairly attach to them, whatever those consequences may be. And hence the mode of our reasoning.

In conducting the argument drawn from this source, we shall attempt to point out some of those things which are universally understood to be implied in, and to be essential to, a moral government; and as these elementary principles are successively pointed out, shall briefly exam-

\* Butler's *Analogy of Religion to the Constitution and Course of Nature*, pt. i., ch. iii.

ine their application to the subject under inquiry. And in this way we propose to make it appear, that the doctrine of the subjection of the volitive power to laws is implied in the existence of moral government. And if such a government exists, which is conceded to be the fact, then the doctrine in question is true.

§ 72. *Laws of the will inferred from that supremacy or paramount authority which is implied in a moral government.*

Every moral government implies, in the first place, a ruler, a governor, some species of supreme authority. The term government itself, separate from any qualifying epithet, obviously expresses the fact that there are some beings governed, which is inconceivable without the correlative of a higher and governing power. And what is true of all other government, is certainly not less so of that species of government which is denominated moral government. In all moral government, therefore, there must undoubtedly be some supreme authority, to which those who are governed are amenable.

Now if men are under government, they are under law. To be governed is obviously to be regulated, guided, or controlled, in a greater or less degree. To say that men are governed, and are, at the same time, exempt from law, is but little short of a verbal contradiction, and is certainly a real one. But when we speak of men as being under laws, we do not mean to assert a mere abstraction. We mean to express something actually existing; in other words, we intend to assert the *fact*, that the actions of men, whatever may be true of their freedom, are in some way or other reached by an effective (that is to say, by a

true or real) supervision. But when we consider the undenied and undoubted dependence of the outward act on the inward volition, we very naturally and properly conclude that the supervision of the outward act is the result of the antecedent supervision of the inward principle of the Will; in other words, the WILL HAS ITS LAWS.

*§ 73. Inferred also from the fact, that the subjects of a moral government must be endued with adequate powers of obedience.*

Moral government implies, in the second place, that there is not only a higher or ruling power, but an inferior one, which may be held accountable to such higher power. And consequently, as all moral government has the right, within certain limits, of exacting obedience from those that are properly under its control, it follows necessarily that the inferiors or subjects of such government must possess the requisite powers of obedience; not a mere transitory obedience yielded for a moment, but one which is accordant to a prescribed course, and yielded for a length of time. But if the Will, which is the governing power over men's actions, be not subject to laws, it is self-evident that such a continued or protracted course of obedience cannot be rendered, even with the most favourable dispositions on the part of those from whom it is due. Man is, in this case, not under the control of himself; he can never tell at one moment what he may do or be the next; and it is altogether inadmissible, therefore, to suppose that he can, by his own act, conform himself to the control of another. There may indeed be an occasional and momentary coincidence between his actions and the requisitions laid upon him; but, whenever this is

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the case, it is merely a matter of accident, and neither in fact nor in spirit comes up to the idea of that obedience which is due to a moral governor. In a word, if the acts of the Will are not based, as the occasions, at least, of their being called forth, upon any conditions whatever, and are truly contingent, man has no power to obey. And if he has no power of obedience, (using the term to mean a continued or protracted, as well as momentary obedience,) then he is under no obligation so to do. And moral government under such circumstances can never exist in respect to the human race.

*§ 74. Laws of the will inferred from that rationality which is essential to the subjects of a moral government.*

In the third place, if we look further into the elementary principles of moral government, we shall find that this sort of administration differs from all natural or physical government in this respect, that its subjects are not only agents, but are necessarily *rational* agents. The attribute of rationality is absolutely essential to them, as accountable and moral beings. That is to say, their actions, so far as they are of a moral nature, are ultimately based upon the perceptions of our intellectual part or understanding.

We can undoubtedly conceive of a purely sentient being, formed wholly of instincts, appetites, desires, and passions, without the intellectual endowments (at least to any extent worthy of especial notice) of perceiving, comparing, abstracting, and reasoning. Nor is the possibility of such a being left wholly to imagination, since we have abundant instances in the brute creation around us. But such beings, wherever they may be found, and whatever

purposes, more or less important, they may answer in the arrangements of the universe, are not the subjects of moral emotions and of feelings of obligation, nor are they morally accountable. A sort of instinctive perception at once adjudges them incapable of that higher destiny. Rationality, therefore, is an incident, or, rather, prerequisite of a moral nature.

If man, therefore, is a rational being, which must be conceded as indispensable to the fact of his being in subjection to a moral government, then his actions, as has been stated, are ultimately based upon the perceptions of the understanding. And if his actions are susceptible of being thus based and regulated, then the operations of the Will may be regulated (and *must* be regulated to the extent that the outward actions are) in the same way, since the outward actions have their origin in the decisions of the voluntary power. But if it be true that the operations of the Will are in this way connected, indirectly and ultimately at least, with the antecedent perceptions of the intellect, then they are subject to laws. There may indeed be, and there certainly are, emotions, and desires, and feelings of obligation intervening between the perceptions of the intellect and the acts of the Will. But still the latter, in all cases, strike their roots, if we may be allowed the expression, through the intervening mental elements, and thrust themselves into the intellect as their original basis and support. Without *this*, man could not, with propriety, be denominated a rational being ; and *with* this, he cannot, with propriety, be deemed a being, the acts of whose Will are in any real sense accidental or contingent.

§ 75. *Laws of the will inferred from the fact that in the administration of a moral government motives are employed.*

Let it further be remembered, as a fixed principle in moral government, that it is sustained in its character of a moral government, not by the application of physical power, but by the presentation of motives. The fact that men are influenced and directed by the motives set before them, is an encouragement in the making of moral efforts, and in the use of such means as are adapted to reclaim the vicious, or to strengthen habits of virtue. When men go astray, what can we do more in our attempts at reclaiming them, than apply promises, threatenings, and exhortations? We address these to them as *motives*, expecting that they will be received and have their influence as such. These are the means which we employ, and we find that they meet with success. But liberate the Will from all particular tendencies and law; show that we are utterly unable to predict the nature of its acts, under all circumstances whatever, and then there is no encouragement to apply means for the attainment of moral ends; there is no encouragement to moral efforts of any kind. When this is the case, we can never tell what is suitable to be addressed to men, in order to induce them to change their course of conduct. And moral government, under such circumstances, cannot exist.

§ 76. *Inferred also from the application of rewards and punishments.*

There is another point of view in which the subject may be contemplated.—Accountability, it will of course be admitted, is essentially and fundamentally involved in the idea of a moral government. But accountability implies that the person or persons who are subject to it may be called to an account; and this, of course, implies that the being who has the right of calling them to such account may inflict punishment in case of delinquency. In other words, wherever there is accountability on the one part, there is the correlative right of enforcing it on the other; that is to say, of punishing, if necessary. But if volitions are independent of motives, and are entirely contingent, no man can tell, as has already been intimated, at one hour or one moment what he will do the next; he cannot possibly have any foresight, even of his own actions, and cannot take measures to prevent those which are evil. In the estimation of a right conscience, there would be no more propriety in punishing such a man's actions, than in punishing a stone or a billet of wood which may have accidentally been the occasion of some injury to us. As his Will is beyond the reach of all laws, there are no principles by means of which its exercises can be subjected, (we do not say to the power of *others* merely,) but even to his own power. He is the sport of an unfathomable fortuity, a sort of football, impelled in every possible contrariety of direction; the ceaseless but imbecile plaything of inexplicable chance. Such a man certainly is not the proper subject of punishment. And, for like reasons, he is not the proper subject of rewards.

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*§ 77. The same inferred from the fact that the moral government of the present life is in its nature disciplinary.*

And there is yet another and distinct view of that moral government under which men are placed, which is especially worthy of notice in connexion with the subject under consideration. The moral administration to which men are subject in the present life, is in its nature disciplinary. As far as man is concerned, it is not to be denied that the present state of being is incipient and preparatory to another and ampler field of existence. It is here, on the field of action where we are now placed in the present life, that it is proposed to train up men for glory, honour, and immortality.

The present is a state of probation preparatory to this end. And it will be kept in mind, that it is proposed to secure this result by trial, exposure, exercise, training, discipline. But a moral regimen of this kind implies that there are evils to be encountered ; that there are duties to be performed ; that there are obstacles to be overcome ; that there are temptations to be resisted ; and that men are not only to sustain their souls in patience, meekness, and fortitude, but to purify them in the prospect of an ultimate triumph.

But if the Will be not subject to laws, all this is words without meaning. It must be obvious, that there can be no moral trial or discipline of man without temptation. And it is no less clear, that temptations must be ultimately addressed to the Will, or they are nothing. My understanding, for instance, tells me that the attainment of a certain object will be promotive of my present good ;

my desires are strongly enkindled in view of that object ; my conscience condemns it ; and here undoubtedly is the basis, the preparatory conditions of the temptation. But still there must be some internal object upon which the temptation presses ; some principle of the mental nature upon which it is brought to bear. And where is this principle or power to be discovered around which the strength of the temptation thus gathers and enters into contest, if it be not the Will ?—But if moral discipline (at least that of the present life) implies temptation ; and if temptation, as it obviously does, implies a pressure upon the Will, then the Will must be subject to laws. For if it be not subject to laws, there seems to be no possible way in which the temptation can approach it or exert any influence upon it. That which is without law either in mind or matter, is necessarily unapproachable except by mere accident.

*§ 78. That the will has laws implied in the existence of virtue and vice.*

Finally, if the Will is truly contingent in its action and entirely without laws, it cannot fail to follow that there is no tenable foundation of VIRTUE and VICE.—It is a common maxim, founded on the general experience, and universally held to be true, that actions are reprehensible or otherwise, according to the designs, intentions, or motives with which they originated. But if the acts of the Will are perfectly contingent, (that is to say, are put forth without a regard to anything else whatever,) then it is obvious that designs or motives, considered in reference to such acts, are entirely excluded, and have no existence. It is evident that a man in that case can

justly say of any action he performs, which is deemed by the community either virtuous or vicious, that it happened merely because it did happen ; that it came to pass without any forethought, or intention, or design on his part ; that he knows of no rational cause of its origin ; and, in a word, that it is truly and wholly *accidental*. And is such a man, of whose actions these statements are undeniably true, to be either blamed or commended ? Where is the basis, in his actions or his character, of either morality or immorality ? Is he not beyond the reach, in every respect, of virtue and vice ?

No one can be ignorant that, when a man is arraigned on any accusation, one of the first inquiries is in respect to his designs or motives in perpetrating the alleged criminal act. By the law of the land, if a man has put another to death with malice aforethought, (that is, with an evil design, or intention of so doing,) it is murder ; if the deed is committed in the violence of momentary passion, without any premeditated purpose, it becomes the diminished crime of manslaughter ; if it be what is called accidental, or, in other words, without any hostile feeling, and without in the least intending or expecting the result which followed, then it is no crime at all. And so, on the other hand, if a man performs a highly beneficial action, with the view and the intention of doing good, all men agree in pronouncing it virtuous and praiseworthy ; but if they discover the action to be wholly accidental, they equally agree in denying to its author any claims to moral merit and commendation. In a word, the circumstance of an action's being accidental is understood to destroy its moral character. But what is the true idea or characteristic of an *accident* ? It is evidently that which has no cause, no reason, no refer-

ence to any fixed principle. And every voluntary act, on the supposition of the Will's not being subjected to law, is precisely conformed to this view. Every such volition is truly an accident. And, as such, the common consent of mankind would deny to it, both in itself and its results, the possession of any moral character whatever.

It would not be difficult to point out passages in writers of acknowledged value, going to confirm the various views of this chapter. On the subject of the present section, President Edwards expresses himself in the following decided language.—“ If it should be allowed that there are some instances wherein the soul chooses without any motive, what virtue can there be in such a choice ? I am sure there is no prudence or wisdom in it. Such a choice is made for no good end ; for it is for no end at all. If it were for any end, the view of the end would be the motive exciting to the act ; and if the act be for no good end, and so from no good aim, then there is no good intention in it : and therefore, according to all our natural notions of virtue, no more virtue in it than in the motion of the smoke which is driven to and fro by the wind, without any aim or end in the thing moved, and which knows not whither, nor why and wherefore, it is moved.”\*

\* Edwards's Inquiry into the Will, part iii., § vii.

## CHAPTER III.

## LAWS OF THE WILL IMPLIED IN THE PRESCIENCE OR FORE-SIGHT OF THE DEITY.

§ 79. *The notion which men naturally form of the Deity implies foreknowledge.*

In proof of the general proposition, that the Will has its laws, we now enter upon a distinct train of thought. In the present chapter we propose to bring forward in its support the Prescience of the Deity. And, accordingly, it will be necessary to say something in support of the fact, that there is such prescience, or, in other words, that God foreknows whatever comes to pass. We do not, however, propose to enter at length into this specific topic ; for the general acquiescence in the proposition of God's foreknowledge renders it unnecessary ; but merely to suggest in relation to it one or two considerations.

And we naturally remark, in the first place, that the idea which all men agree in forming of the Deity implies foreknowledge. We say nothing here of the light which Revelation throws upon this subject ; but refer merely to the notion of the Deity which men form themselves. The basis of this paramount idea is abundantly laid in the human constitution. We do not undertake to say it is *innate*, in the sense in which that term has been commonly understood ; but merely assert that the human mind is so constituted, and is operated upon by such influences, that the idea of God arises in it naturally and

certainly, unless there are some peculiar circumstances counteracting this tendency. Hence we find, in all countries and among all classes of men ; in the cheerless hut of the Esquimaux ; in the rude dwellings of the uncivilized tribes inhabiting the islands of the Pacific ; in the tent of the vagrant Arab, as well as among those who are refined by the arts and enlightened by science, the notion of a God. The conception may indeed be a feeble and imperfect one, compared with that developed in the Scriptures ; but, feeble as it is, it always includes the idea of prescience or foresight in a much higher degree than is possessed by men. The very heathen would scoff at the idea of a God, whose knowledge is limited to the present moment.

§ 80. *The prescience of God involved and implied in his omniscience.*

But we are not left, in the consideration of this subject, to the suggestions which are furnished by an examination of the opinions of men, however naturally they may have arisen, or however widely prevailed. God has seen fit, in the exercise of his great mercy, to speak by his Revealed Word, and to pour the light of inspiration on the dim and uncertain light of human reason. He has declared himself to possess *all knowledge*. He who is familiar with the Bible cannot fail to recollect many passages where this great truth appears. The hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm, one of the most striking and beautiful in that exceedingly interesting collection of sacred poetry, turns almost exclusively upon the great and wonderful knowledge of God. “Thou knowest my down sitting and mine uprising ; thou understandest my thoughts

afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways." The Psalmist in another place, after asserting the greatness of the Lord and of his power, immediately adds, that "*his understanding is infinite.*" In another passage of the Psalms of great sublimity, God is introduced as saying, "I know all the fowls of the mountains, and the wild beasts of the field are mine;" expressions which convey a sentiment parallel to that of the New Testament, in the passages where it is asserted that not a sparrow falls without the notice of God, and that the hairs of our head are numbered. "Neither is there any creature," says the Apostle, "that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." The beloved disciple says, "God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things."<sup>\*</sup>

But if God is omniscient, which is clearly implied or asserted in these and many other passages, it follows, of course, that he is able to foresee events, whatever they may be, which shall come to pass in future times.

And let it be remembered here, that God does not have a knowledge of things in precisely the same way as men have, viz., in *succession*, or as they arise before the mind's eye one after another; but, on the contrary, it seems rather to be the fact, that all the knowledge He possesses, whether more or less, exists in the perception of his mind simultaneously; it is all taken in and contemplated at one view. With Him there is neither beginning of days nor end of years; no present, past, nor future. And hence, if we strike off from the great circle of his knowledge that part or section which we, in consequence of our limited views, denominate the future, his

\* Ps. cxlvii., 5; 1, 10. Heb. iv., 13. First Epis. of John, iii., 20.

omniscience is at once shorn of the attribute of perfection, and is presented before us in a state of deformity and mutilation. And, accordingly, we assert that the omniscience of God, a truth so obvious to reason and so abundantly taught in the Scriptures, implies the doctrine of prescience, (or, at least, what men, adopting their language to their own modes of perception, call PRESCIENCE,) and that he has a clear knowledge of all future events.

*§ 81. The prescience of God directly taught in the Scriptures.*

The divine prescience or foresight is not only implied in the omniscience of God, as that attribute is made known in the Scriptures, but is itself separately and distinctly made known in a multitude of passages. The Supreme Being himself, in the language ascribed to Him by the prophet Isaiah, asserts, "I am God, and there is none like me, *declaring the end from the beginning*, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done." "Known unto God," says the Apostle James, "are all his works, *from the beginning of the world*."<sup>\*</sup>

Nor does the doctrine of God's foreknowledge rest upon general statements alone; but we have instances, again and again, of predictions, uttered long before the events came to pass, which were strictly fulfilled. The deluge was predicted one hundred and twenty years before it came on the face of the earth. It was foretold that the children of Israel should be in bondage four hundred years. The cruel conduct of the Syrian Hazael, and the deliverance wrought out by the hand of the Persian Cyrus, are matters of precise and specific prediction

\* Isaiah xlvi., 9, 10. Acts xv., 18.

The destruction of Babylon and of Nineveh, with many of the circumstances attending their overthrow, was predicted also. The coming and the preaching of Jesus Christ, and particularly his humiliation, trials, and death, were foretold by the mouths of holy men many years, and even ages, before the events themselves took place. The destruction of Jerusalem (not to mention other instances equally decisive in their bearing on this subject) was depicted long before it happened, and with a wonderful particularity and vividness.—In view of these facts, and others like them, we have only to make the remark, and we do it with full confidence in its correctness, that predictions so numerous and specific, and so exactly fulfilled, could not have been uttered without the possession of foreknowledge or prescience on the part of their author.

*§ 82. The foreknowledge of events implies the foreknowledge of volitions.*

And it is further to be noticed, in regard to many, if not all, the events which have taken place in accordance with such predictions as those referred to in the last section, that they were dependent on the volitions of men. The voluntary actions of men necessarily imply the antecedent exercise of volitions; and it is impossible that any being whatever should foresee the actions without a foresight, at the same time, of their volitions. As an illustration, it was foretold to Abraham that his descendants should go into Egypt, and should take up their residence there; but such a prediction evidently implies a knowledge of all the circumstances under which this event should take place, including, in particular, every motive

and every volition connected with it. Such a prediction implies a knowledge, not only of the volitions and acts of the immediate agents in the events foretold, but of those persons also who were concerned in them incidentally and collaterally. In the present case, it implies a knowledge of the jealousies of Joseph's brethren, and of their perverse and wicked conduct in selling him to the Ishmaelites ; it implies a knowledge of the wants, interests, and motives of the Ishmaelites themselves ; not to mention the situation and motives of other individuals and bodies of men, which were undoubtedly among the preparatory steps and means to the wonderful events which followed.

Every one knows, that events of the greatest magnitude are dependent upon circumstances apparently the most trivial. It is a remark of Dr. Dwight, that the "motions of a fly are capable of terminating the most important human life, or of changing all the future designs of a man, and altering the character, circumstances, and destiny of his descendants throughout time and eternity."\* Now, if these things are so, it cannot for a moment be conceded that God foreknows and predicts events without a knowledge of all those circumstances, even the most trivial, upon which those events may, by any possibility, be dependent. In particular, and above all, He must be minutely and fully acquainted with the volitive acts or volitions of the immediate agents in them. In foreseeing events in which men are concerned, He must, of course, foresee what men will do ; but it is inconceivable that he should know this without knowing what volitions they will put forth.

\* Dwight's Theology, Sermon vi.

*§ 83. Of the reasonableness of the foregoing views.*

These views, in regard to the extent and particularity of God's foreknowledge, commend themselves at once to the common sense and feelings of men. It would be of but little avail to extol God as the Creator of all worlds and all beings, if he could not foresee what would be the result of their creation; if he could not tell whether their existence would be beneficial or injurious to themselves or others. Existence is known, not only from what it is in itself, but from its issues. And if God has no foresight of the results of his works, He creates he knows not what; and if He is ignorant of his own works, no other being can be supposed to have knowledge of them. Would such a God, supposing him to be truly and fully the Creator of all things, be able to hold the reins of government over the things He had made? Would he not be continually perplexed, and compelled, at every turn in the affairs of the Universe, to alter his plans? Certain it is, that the doctrine which denies the full and perfect prescience of the Deity greatly degrades Him. It leaves Him at the mercy, as it were, of the most trifling circumstances. The movement of a single atom (as it is possible, even for a matter so trivial as that, to alter the destiny of a world) might perplex His wisest purposes and defeat his most benevolent plans.

*§ 84. Application of these views to the will.*

But if it satisfactorily appears that God foreknows all things, particularly the volitions of men, then it clearly follows that the volitive power or Will has its laws. The

opposite of a subjection to law, as has already been remarked, is perfect *contingency*; and the very idea of contingency or of contingent action implies that it is something which cannot possibly be foreknown. Whatever is foreknown must be foreknown to exist at a particular time or place, or under some particular circumstances; but that action or event, which it is ascertained and certain will exist at a particular time or place, or under any particular and definite circumstances, cannot, with any propriety of language, be deemed a contingent one. Since, therefore, nothing which is foreknown is contingent, and since the volitions of men are obviously the subjects of foreknowledge, it follows that there must be some definite laws or principles by which the action of the voluntary or volitive power is regulated.

*§ 85. The views of this chapter in harmony with the doctrine of the influences of the Holy Spirit.*

As in some respects closely connected with the views of this chapter, we may here, with propriety, refer to the Scripture doctrine that God, through the influences of the Holy Spirit, has the power, and, when in his providence he sees fit, exerts the power, of enlightening, sanctifying, and guiding the minds of men. The reader of the Bible will naturally be reminded here of the Saviour's interesting expressions on this subject, which are found in the concluding chapters of the Gospel of John.—“I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.” “And the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto

you." John xiv., 16, 26.—"So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia."—"Then Saul, who is also called Paul, filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes upon him, and said, Oh full of all subtlety," &c.—"And were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia." Acts xiii., 4, 9; xvi., 6.—"Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." 1 Cor. ii., 13.—"Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Pet. i., 21.

All these passages, and others like them, necessarily and clearly imply, although there is no doubt of the fact of man's moral and religious rebellion, that the human mind, nevertheless, is circumscribed and overruled in its operations to some extent, and is still held in subordination to the all-pervading and transcendent control of the Supreme Intelligence.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### LAWS OF THE WILL IMPLIED IN THE PRESCIENCE OR FORE-SIGHT OF MEN.

#### § 86. *Man as well as Deity susceptible of foresight.*

It may, perhaps, be objected by some, that the argument drawn from the prescience of the Deity is less satisfactory than it would otherwise be, in consequence of the unspeakable elevation and incomprehensibleness of the Divine Mind. That the divine mind is, in some re-

spects, incomprehensible by man, is true ; but it does not follow that an argument, founded upon what we know and can understand of the divine nature, is therefore incomprehensible or even obscure. But whatever weight, whether more or less, may be conceded to this objection, we come to another view of the subject, analogous indeed to that of the last chapter, but drawn from a different source, and level to every one's comprehension. Man himself, restricted and dimmed as his conceptions undoubtedly are, has a prescience of the future, a foresight of what is to come to pass, as well as the adorable Being who made him. Not in an equal degree indeed, but still in some degree. And this fact also goes to confirm the position which we are now examining in regard to the Will.

*§ 87. Prescience or foresight of men in respect to their own situation and conduct.*

In the first place, man can foretell (we do not say with perfect certainty, nor is that at all essential to our argument) his own situation, actions, and success at some future time.

Take a very simple illustration. A man proposes to go to Boston or New-York, or to some place of common resort, no matter where it is, for the purpose of transacting business there. The execution of a design of this nature, although it is difficult to mention one more common and simple, implies the putting forth of hundreds and thousands of volitions. And it is undoubtedly the fact, that the object in view cannot be effected without this great number of volitions. And yet we perceive that this person goes forward with confidence, and that he

makes his calculations without fear, and with a feeling of certainty that he will be able to execute them. He evidently proceeds upon the supposition (although he may not be fully conscious of it at the time, and may never have made it a matter of distinct reflection) that the operations of the Will exist in reference to some fixed principles ; and particularly in connexion with motives in their various kinds and degrees. And looking at his proposed undertaking with care, and understanding well the claims, both of interest and duty, which are involved in it, he determines or wills in reference to the general plan before him, whatever it may be, without even doubting that all the future acts of the voluntary power will be accordant with its requisite details ; and that, in due season, it will be brought to a fulfilment in all its parts. But we may assert with confidence, that this could never be done if volitions were entirely contingent ; in other words, if they were without laws. For if this last were the case, he would be just as likely to go to Providence as Boston, to Albany as New-York, or to any other place whatever, as to that where he first determined to go ; and would be just as likely to do the direct opposite as that particular business which he designed to accomplish at his first setting out.—And the views, applicable in this particular case, will apply to the multiplied occurrences and duties of every week and day. And they furnish of themselves, and independently of every other argument which may be brought up, but little short of a demonstration of what we are attempting to establish.

*§ 88. Foresight of men in respect to the conduct of others.*

In the second place, men are able to foretell, with a considerable degree of certainty, the situation, actions, and success of others at some future time. This is so notorious as not unfrequently to have elicited the remark, that there is a certain regular order in the conduct of men, in some degree analogous to the regular course of things, which we never fail to observe in the physical world. Men may everywhere be found who would no more hesitate to predict the precise conduct of their neighbours in certain assignable circumstances, than they would to predict that trees of a certain kind would grow in a given situation.

Some instances will illustrate what we mean.—A poor man goes to a rich man in the same neighbourhood, who is a confirmed and inexorable miser, for the purpose of borrowing a sum of money, but without being willing to give the customary interest of twenty per cent., and unable at the same time to furnish adequate security for the principal. Everybody knows that the miser will refuse his money at once. They expect and predict it with hardly less confidence than they predict, that a stone thrown into the air will immediately fall to the earth's surface. “A prisoner,” says Mr. Hume, “who has neither money nor interest, discovers the impossibility of escape, as well when he considers the obstinacy of his guards as the walls and bars with which he is surrounded; and in all his attempts for his freedom, chooses rather to work upon the stone and iron of the one, than upon the inflexible nature of the other.” This remark of Mr. Hume is an important one, and, without question, is

essentially correct. Undoubtedly it is sometimes the case, that prisoners endeavour to effect their escape by working upon the passions and will of their guards ; but in a vast majority of cases they consider their chance of escape much better by means of attempts made upon the stone and iron that enclose them. They understand so well the connexion between motive and volition, between interest and duty on the one hand and the resolves of the will on the other, that, with the knowledge they possess of the characters and situation of those who are appointed to act as their guards, they consider their escape by means of any collusion with them, or any assistance from that source, as an utter impossibility.\*

#### § 89. *Other familiar instances of this foresight.*

But we will now proceed to give some instances which are less remote from common observation. The reader may perhaps recollect some remarks of Dr. Paley, relative to our constant dependence on our fellow-men. "Every hour of our lives we trust and depend upon others ; and it is impossible to stir a step, or, what is worse, to sit still a moment, without such trust and dependence. I am now writing at my ease, not doubting (or, rather, never distrust-  
ing, and, therefore, never thinking about it) but that the butcher will send in the joint of meat which I ordered ;

\* Expressions very similar to those of Mr. Hume, and certainly not less strong in their import, are found in a Treatise of Lord Kames, (*Principles of Morality*, pt. i., Essay iii.,) and also in the recent work of Dr. Abercrombie on the Moral Feelings, part ii.—"We can foretell," says the last-mentioned writer, "the respective effects which a tale of distress will have upon a cold-hearted miser and a man of active benevolence, with the same confidence with which we can predict the different actions of acid upon an alkali and upon a metal."

that his servant will bring it ; that my cook will dress it ; that my footman will serve it up ; and that I shall find it on the table at one o'clock."\*—And this is a state of things which is constantly occurring, not only in the matter of the daily food necessary for the support of our lives, but in a thousand other instances. The merchant depends upon his clerks ; the manufacturer upon his numerous operatives of all classes and conditions ; the farmer, who works upon a large scale, depends upon the hands of others as much as he does upon the labour of his own hands ; the commander of a vessel constantly reckons upon the efficient co-operation of his sailors ; the leader of armies relies upon the movements of vast bodies of men made with the utmost precision in the most trying circumstances. And it is the same in all situations, and among all classes of men, as any one, who will in the least trouble himself to exercise his recollection, will be abundantly satisfied. But if all these persons operated by mere accident, and without regard to any fixed principles ; if it were a matter of entire contingency whether they should perform their engagements or not, it is easy to see that all the sources of enjoyment and even of existence would be destroyed, and the foundations of society speedily broken up.

*§ 90. The fact of laws of the will shown from the regularity of voluntary contributions and of deposits.*

In connexion with the topic now before us, viz., that we are able to foretell, with a considerable degree of certainty, the situation and actions of others at some future time, we request the attention of the reader to a class of

\* Moral Philosophy, book iii., chap. v.

facts which are somewhat peculiar. It cannot have escaped the notice of any one as in some degree a characteristic of modern times, that there are a multitude of benevolent associations, whose receipts depend wholly upon *voluntary* contributions. But, notwithstanding the fact of their income being wholly voluntary, which, if experience had not shown to the contrary, would be exceedingly discouraging, they proceed in their affairs with nearly or quite the same confidence as if they had a fixed capital to operate with. They send out missionaries, establish schools, translate the Scriptures, explore unknown and barbarous countries, plant colonies, erect churches, and engage in other important and expensive undertakings, without a cent of money except what comes from voluntary gifts. They make their calculations beforehand as to what they can accomplish in a given time; and not unfrequently incur heavy expenses in anticipation of their receipts. Their true capital is a knowledge of the operations of the human mind under certain assignable circumstances. These circumstances they are in a good degree acquainted with; and hence are enabled to anticipate the amount of their receipts for a given time with almost as much accuracy as the merchant or farmer, who has an actual capital already in his possession to operate with. Does not this circumstance go, with others, to show that the Will has its laws ?

Without enlarging further upon this topic, we merely observe, that it reminds us of another interesting fact somewhat analogous to this. It is, that banks issue bills and lend money upon their deposites, and often to a great amount. They take this course as they believe, and as they have undoubted reason to believe, with almost entire safety. By observation, they ascertain that their custom-

ers, (although the ability of their customers to do it evidently depends on a thousand *apparent* contingencies,) deposite a certain amount, or nearly so, within a given time. They find, as a general thing, that the variation in the amount received in specified times is not greater than the variation of the receipts of an individual who is largely engaged in business. And they consider this state of things basis enough for very extended transactions. But could this, or anything else of the same kind, possibly be, if the Will were wholly exempt from everything having the nature of definite or fixed principles of action ?

#### § 91. *Of sagacity in the estimate of individual character*

We now proceed to introduce to the consideration of the reader another view of the subject of this chapter, which is exceedingly interesting in itself, besides furnishing an argument deserving of some attention. It is not uncommon to find men who exhibit a sort of quickness or sagacity in the estimate of individual character, which is sometimes described by the phrase, *a knowledge of the world, or of human nature*. This knowledge is undoubtedly possessed by all persons to some extent ; but not unfrequently individuals are found who possess it in a remarkably high degree. In some men it may be said not only to assume the appearance, but even to approximate the nature of a *prophetic* anticipation or foresight ; and when this is the case, it is an acquisition, as no one can be ignorant, of great power and value. The late Mr. Dumont, of Geneva, in his Recollections of Mirabeau, has noticed this ability in one of its more striking forms.—Speaking of the political life of that celebrated man,

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especially in its connexion with his knowledge of men and his political foresight, he goes on to say, "It was by the same instinctive penetration that Mirabeau so easily detected the feelings of the Assembly, and so often embarrassed his opponents by revealing their secret motives, and laying open that which they were most anxious to conceal. There seemed to exist no political enigma which he could not solve. He came at once to the most intimate secrets, and his sagacity alone was of more use to him than a multitude of spies in the enemy's camp. I used sometimes to attribute the severity of his judgments to hatred or jealousy, but it has been justified by succeeding events, and there was not a man of any consequence in the Assembly, the sum of whose conduct did not correspond with the opinion which Mirabeau had formed of him.

" Independently of this natural gift, this intellect of penetration, his life had been so agitated, he had been so tossed upon the sea of human existence, as he used to say, that he had acquired vast experience of the world and of men. He detected, in a moment, every shade of character; and, to express the result of his observations, he had invented a language scarcely intelligible to any but himself; had terms to indicate fractions of talents, qualities, virtues, or vices—halves and quarters—and, at a glance, he could perceive every real or apparent contradiction. No form of vanity, disguised ambition, or tortuous proceedings could escape his penetration; but he could also perceive good qualities, and no man had a higher esteem for energetic and virtuous characters."\*

It cannot be necessary to add anything to show how this instance, and others like it, (for the political history

\* Dumont's Recollections of Mirabeau, chap. xiv.

of every age brings to light some men of this stamp,) connects itself with and illustrates our subject.

§ 92. *Foresight of the conduct of masses of men and nations.*

It is not too much to say that we are able, not only to predict with a considerable degree of certainty the conduct of individuals in any given circumstances, but we may do the same of whole classes of men, and even nations. Hence the remark which Lord Bacon has somewhere made, and which is strikingly characterized by its poetical as well as its philosophical spirit. "The shepherds of the people," he says, "should understand the *prognostics of state tempests*; hollow blasts of wind seemingly at a distance, and secret swellings of the sea, often precede a storm."

But we may carry this view into some particulars which are deserving of notice. The results, for instance, of a popular election, if certain data are ascertained, are often considered as settled, even before the day of voting has arrived; although the conclusions thus formed are based in part upon opinions relative to whole classes of men, who differ from each other in their callings, interests, and prejudices.

Again, the speculations in the public or national stocks are very frequently prompted by the opinions, which those who are engaged in such speculations are able to form of the course which states and nations will take in some future time.

One of the most striking facts, involving the foresight or prescience of the conduct of large masses of men, is the financial estimate which is annually made by govern-

ments. It is well known that the amount of property invested in commerce, with the annual returns of revenue to the government, is every year estimated in advance, and with very considerable accuracy, by the treasury departments of all civilized nations.

Reasoning from what has taken place in times past, we may predict, with a good degree of accuracy, what number of letters will be written and circulated through a nation at any future time. The number of letters is indicated by the amount of postage; and this is a matter which the governments of nations have thought it important to them to ascertain. If a person will take the pains to examine the total receipts of the Postoffice Department of the United States, in the successive years from 1790 to 1830, he will notice, with but few exceptions, and those easily explained, a gradual and very regular increase in the amount; the increase being such as would naturally be expected from the augmentation of the wealth and population of the country.

It would seem, in looking at the statistical tables for this purpose, that in the year 1815 there was an increase decidedly greater than would be naturally expected in ordinary circumstances. But this was probably owing (and equally satisfactory reasons will be found for other equally marked variations) to the recent return of peace with Great Britain, which at once gave a new and expanded impulse to the business transactions of the country.

We presume it will be found also on inquiry, that the number of letters not taken from the subordinate offices, and returned from time to time to the General Postoffice, or DEAD LETTERS so called, is nearly the same from year to year, or varying so as to correspond to the variation in

the number of letters received. It is stated by Laplace, that the number of dead letters remaining at and returned from other offices to the Postoffice at Paris is, in ordinary times, nearly the same from one year to another. The same thing has been stated of the Dead Letter Office, as it is called, in London.\*—All these things conclusively evince that the actions of men, whether considered individually or in masses, are not left to chance or mere accident.

§ 93. *Proof from the regularity observable in the commission of crime.*

The Statistics of crime, (a painful but very interesting and important view of human nature,) as well as all other statistical views which are based upon the occupations and conduct of men, throw light upon this subject. The reader will find valuable information on this matter, besides other sources of information which are constantly multiplying, in the Annual Reports of the American Discipline Society, in the article on the Statistics of Crime in the Encyclopædia Americana, in the Report of Messrs. Beaumont and Toqueville on the Penitentiary System in the United States, and particularly in the valuable work of M. Guerry, entitled, *Essai sur la Statistique Morale de la France*.

It appears from the class of works which have now been specified, that, under certain circumstances, there is in human nature an unquestionable disposition or tendency to crime, to a certain extent. And this tendency is found, by a comparison of the facts which are furnished us in the statistical tables of crime, to be so definite and

\* Edinburgh Review, vol. xxii.

certain in its results, that one may predict at the beginning of each year what number will be brought before the criminal tribunals; what number will be acquitted; what number will be condemned to death; the number condemned to hard labour for life or for a term of years; the number condemned to solitary imprisonment; and many things of this kind. And this can be done with a great degree of accuracy and certainty; probably with greater certainty than the Treasury Departments of nations can make their annual estimate of the national income and expenditure.

From the statistical tables of crime in France, it appears that about one in every four thousand and four hundred of the inhabitants is arraigned at a criminal tribunal. Of the persons thus arraigned, one out of every four, or very nearly in that proportion, is accused of a crime against persons; the others of crimes against property. Out of one hundred accused, about sixty-one will be regularly found guilty. The number of murders and manslaughters in France (and a similar statement would undoubtedly, on examination, be found true of other countries) will be found to be nearly the same from year to year. In 1826, it was 610; in 1827, it was 556; in 1828, it amounted to 520; in 1829, to 528; in the years 1830, 1831, and 1832 respectively, to 469, 605, and 641.

It will appear also from these inquiries, that not only the murders and manslaughters will be nearly the same every year during a number of successive years, but also that the particular methods and instruments of crime, such as the musket, the knife, or poisoning, will be nearly the same from year to year. Thus the number of deaths in France by poisoning in the year 1826, was 26; in the year 1827, it was 34; in 1828, the number amounted to

43 ; in 1829, to 47 ; in the years 1830, 1831, and 1832 respectively, it amounted to 37, 36, and 27.

If statistical tables should be made of every art, department, and calling in life of farmers, shoemakers, tailors, merchants, blacksmiths, students, preachers, and all other classes, similar results would be exhibited. That is to say, we could very nearly tell, scores of years, or even centuries beforehand, in a given place and under certain given circumstances, what number would till the ground, or smite the anvil, or practise the arts of commerce, or pursue other occupations.—It will be noticed that this view of the subject in particular cannot be charged with being merely speculative or conjectural. And the bearing of it upon the structure of the human mind, particularly upon that department of the mind which is now under consideration, will readily suggest itself to the reader.

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## CHAPTER V.

### LAWS OF THE WILL INVOLVED IN ITS OWN NATURE.

#### § 94. *The doctrine of the will's subjection to law confirmed by consciousness.*

WE proceed now to other views of this interesting subject, which place it in a new and somewhat more definite and specific aspect. If we examine with suitable caution, we shall find that laws of the Will are clearly involved in its own nature.—But, before proceeding to explain the import and to show the truth of this proposi-

tion, we have one remark to make here, viz., that the doctrine of the will's being subject to law is, as seems to us, confirmed by our Consciousness. Certain it is, we all of us have the testimony of our inward experience, that there is a relation, whatever may be its nature, and however difficult of explanation, between volition and motives. As a general statement, (for we do not here speak of those actions which, in consequence of being frequently repeated, have become almost mechanical, nor of those which are entirely trifling and insignificant,) no man is conscious of a volition who is not also conscious of a knowledge of some antecedent which constitutes the occasion, motive, or cause of the subsequent volition. And if so, then the testimony of consciousness may properly be adduced in support of the general position which we are endeavouring to maintain.

*§ 95. The same confirmed by the fact of the will's not being a subject, but an attribute.*

But returning to the specific subject of this chapter, viz., that laws of the will are involved in its own nature, we proceed to remark, that the faculty of the Will is not a distinct entity by itself, but rather an incident to, or an appurtenance of, something else; in other words, it is not the *subject*, which might more reasonably put forth claims of independence, but sustains the subordinate relation of an *attribute*. As the Will is evidently only one of the many attributes of that distinct and organized existence which we denominate the soul or mind, it is necessarily subjected to all the conditions implied in that relation. If the Will, in its ordinary conditions, is not only free, (a truth which is readily and fully conceded,) but is capable

also of a perfectly contingent action ; if it be not only independent of compulsion, but independent also of all regulative oversight and control ; if no principles whatever pervade its varieties of action, and secure to them something like symmetry and order ; then, so far as we have an understanding in the matter, it is obviously not merely an attribute or part of that whole which we variously denominate the MIND or SOUL, but must be regarded as a distinct existence by itself. But if it be otherwise, and the Will is truly an attribute, as it undoubtedly is, then, like every other attribute, it is necessarily subordinate to the fundamental conditions of that existence or entity to which it belongs ; and, from the nature of the case, cannot sustain the claims which have sometimes been set up for it, to a wholly irresponsible and independent action.

§ 96. *The same confirmed by the fact, that every exercise of the Will implies an object.*

We may further argue the matter under consideration by a reference to the nature of the exercises of the will or volitions. If we rightly understand the subject, the very idea of volition implies some antecedent object. In other words, it is a condition or law of the Will's action, *that it cannot put forth a volition except in reference to some object.* It is perfectly obvious, in any given case, that there can be no determining upon it without something which is determined ; no resolving without something resolved on ; but as these are only other names for willing or volition, it is equally obvious that there can be no volition without an object towards which the act of the Will is directed. It is the same here as it is with

the memory, desire, association, and the like. There can be no act of the memory without something which is remembered; no act of the desire without something which is desired; no act of association without some subject or object to which the principle of association attaches itself. But if, by universal admission, it would be altogether absurd to speak of remembrance, desire, and association without some object towards which they are directed or upon which they can operate, it would seem clearly to follow that volition without an object is no less an absurdity. It is something impossible; something not admitted by the nature of the mind itself.

But if volition has in all cases an object, it cannot well be denied that its action is in all cases subjected to some law. This object, without which volition cannot exist, is, of course, a *condition* of its existence. And it is evident that everything which is a condition of action, is in some sense (and, we may add, in a true and very important sense) a *law* to that being or power which puts forth such action. The will, therefore, is, in its very nature, subject to law.

*§ 97. Confirmed also by the fact, that every exercise of the will implies a motive.*

Furthermore, such is the nature of the will, that it must in its exercise not only have an object, in reference to which it acts, but, what is not less important, it must have a *motive* to action. Sometimes the outward object is called a motive. But we speak now of the internal or subjective, in distinction from the external or objective motive. In this sense we say, there must be a motive as well as an object. Both of these conditions of volitive

action are indispensable. In the absence of either of them, it does not appear how any movement of the Will can possibly take place.

Place any object whatever before the mind ; make it a distinct inquiry whether such object shall be obtained ; reflect upon it for any length of time, and in view of any multitude of considerations ; and, unless there exists in the mind that peculiar mental state which we denominate a motive, viz., some form of Desire or some sentiment of Obligation, the voluntary power will remain immutably and forever motionless. It is, therefore, another law of the Will, resulting from its own constitution or nature, **THAT IT ACTS, AND ACTS ONLY, IN CONNEXION WITH MOTIVES.**

The subject of Motives, in connexion with the doctrine of the Will, is a very interesting and important one. But we make scarcely more than a mere allusion to it here, because it will be necessary hereafter to resume it, and to examine it more particularly. We cannot forbear saying, however, that the outward or objective motive (more simply and precisely the *OBJECT*) is presented before the Will by the Intellect. The internal or subjective motive, which, in philosophic strictness, is the *true* motive, is presented before the Will by the Sensibilities. The former indicates the direction in which the movement of the Will is to be made ; the latter furnishes the proximate cause or ground of the movement. Both, as has been stated, are indispensable to the Will's action ; but the circumstance, that the one is Intellective and the other Sensitive in its origin, forever distinguishes them from each other.

§ 98. *Confirmed also by the fact, that every exercise of the will implies belief.*

In introducing those considerations which are now presented to the reader's notice, we are aware that we are repeating, to some extent, what has already been said in a former chapter of this volume. We shall, therefore, state them much more concisely than we might otherwise feel at liberty to do.

Another law of the Will involved in its own nature, and which we have already had occasion to notice, is, that FAITH is a condition of volition. In other words, we cannot put forth an exercise of the Will or volition in respect to any given thing, *without some degree of faith or belief in the practicability or attainableness of that thing.*

We do not suppose that this law of the Will's action can be a matter of dispute. Whoever will make the experiment; whoever will endeavour to put forth a volition in reference to any object which he fully believes and knows to be beyond his power, (for instance, in reference to flying in the air, or the creation of a tree or stone,) will assuredly satisfy himself of the impracticability of the attempt. In every case of this kind, there is an utter destitution or negation of belief. The person does not believe, even in the slightest degree, in the practicability of the thing. And, therefore, he not only does not, but he cannot will it. Such is his nature.

Furthermore, it seems to be a subordinate law of the Will, allied to, and growing out of, that which has just been mentioned, although there is perhaps a little more uncertainty attending it, that the degree of the voluntary or volitive energy, in cases where belief actually exists

will be in proportion, or nearly so, to the intensity or measure of belief. In other words, if our belief in the practicability of a thing is full and strong, the voluntary effort which we shall make will be likely, if other things do not concur to prevent this result, to partake of the energy of our faith. And, on the other hand, if our belief be vacillating and weak, the natural result will be, that the volition, the effort of the voluntary faculty, will be proportionately vacillating and powerless.—(See on this subject, part i., chap. iv.)

**§ 98. Statement of other laws that are involved in the constitution or nature of the will itself.**

Another law of the Will, involved in its own nature as that nature is ascertained by consciousness and general observation, is, that in its exercise *it has exclusive relation to our own actions, and to whatever may be truly dependent upon us, but not to anything beyond this limit.*—This law of the Will's action has been already (part i., chap. iv.) so fully explained and illustrated by examples, that it is unnecessary to delay upon it here.

We may refer here also to the law of the Will, that its action *is always prospective ; always looks forward to the future.* It is not like the feelings of regret and remorse, for instance, that are always looking backward ; it is not like the memory, which is continually diving after and bringing up images from the abyss of things that are gone by ; but, although present in itself, it continually contemplates results that are in futurity. And such is its nature, that it cannot act otherwise.—We may add to this enumeration of the ascertained and determinate principles of the Will's action the fact, that the degree or strength

of the volitive effort or volition will depend not only upon our belief in the practicability of the thing before us, but also upon the particular state of the sensibilities at the time. If, for instance, our desires are strong, the volitions to which they give rise will possess a corresponding degree of strength, unless there is a counteracting cause in the opposition of the moral feelings. And if both the Natural and the Moral sensibility, the feelings of moral obligation as well as the desires, happen to be in the same direction, the voluntary energy will be proportionately increased.—The reader will, without difficulty, apply these statements to the general subject under consideration.

*§ 100. Proof on the subject before us from instances of predominant emotion and passion.*

There is another train of thought, which naturally presents itself to notice in the present chapter. We refer to instances of predominant emotion and passion, and the effect of such predominance in its relation to the acts of the Will. He who has made human nature a study, either in the past annals of the human race or within the range of his own personal observation, must have frequently noticed individuals in whom the passions have become so strong as to encroach upon the domain of the voluntary power, and to bring it into subjection. No matter what the passion is, (whether attachment to one's intimate friends, or attachment to one's country and the place of his birth, or the love of pleasure, or the desire of acquiring property, or jealousy, or party zeal, or hatred, or ambition,) instances are everywhere found in society of the existence of the particular passion, whatever

it may be, in such overwhelming strength as to make the man a slave to it.

We might bring forward instances, and show more distinctly what we mean, were it not that they will find a more appropriate place in another chapter in a subsequent part of the work, where we shall endeavour to explain what we understand by Enthralment or Slavery of the Will. But we may probably assume here, without hesitation, as a fact well known and readily admitted, that such instances exist ; that men, submitting to the influence of a predominant passion, lose in a great degree that voluntary power which characterizes and ennobles human nature. In respect to certain persons, places, and objects, the Will, which, in its connexion with other persons, and places, and objects, was operative and effective, has lost its power, is entirely quiescent and subdued ; and if it makes at times what may be called an appreciable effort, it certainly fails to make an available one, and oftentimes this is a permanent state of things. It is frequently the case, that no lapse of time, no completeness of seclusion, no advice and consolation of friends, can weaken the controlling and inordinate influence, whatever it is ; and thus, by liberating the Will, restore the parts of the mind to their true and appropriate position. But it certainly seems very obvious, if the Will is thus sometimes made captive to the passions, that there must be a real and operative connexion between the Will and the passions. In other words, there must be some fixed relations existing between the different parts of the mind, and a reciprocal influence propagated from one part to another. And it seems to be a natural consequence of this, that the Will must be regarded as being, in some true and real sense, subject to laws.

§ 101. *Of the sense in which the proposition under consideration is to be understood.*

We wish to pause here in the discussion for the purpose of making a single remark. We have laid down and endeavoured to prove, by what may be called a cumulative process of argument, the general proposition, THAT THE WILL HAS ITS LAWS. And, in doing this, we have had occasion to point out some of them. But what we wish to remark now is this.—In predicating laws of the Will, we do not mean to assert (and perhaps the reader sufficiently understands this already) that the Will has laws in the same sense in which a piece of wood, or a tree, or a pendulum, or a clock, or a watch, or any other purely material object, has laws. When we assert that the Will is subject to law, the terms of the proposition must of course be modified by the nature of the subject, and be explained in conformity with that nature.

Nor are we to suppose that any practical mystery or difficulty necessarily attends this modification. We speak, for instance, of the POWER of the human mind; and we also speak of the POWER of the steam-engine; but there is evidently no difficulty in making the requisite modification of the import of the term power in these two cases. And so in the case before us. We apply the term laws to the mind as well as to matter; but obviously with some modification of meaning, resulting from the nature of the subject. Nor does the necessity of this modification perplex the proper apprehension or understanding of the terms which we thus use. Numberless propositions, having a relation to mind, and which, in their mental application, are somewhat modified in meaning, are as well

understood as other propositions which have exclusive relation to material things.

Furthermore, it is well understood and acknowledged, that we can very properly, and with a clear apprehension of the import of the terms, predicate laws of the other parts of the mind, of the perceptive power, of memory, of reasoning, of imagination, and other powers. And if we can predicate laws of spiritual existence, or spiritual attributes, or spiritual action in any case whatever, we do not see why we cannot equally well predicate them, with the modification which has just been mentioned, of the human Will.

The proposition, therefore, which we have been considering, has a distinct and substantive meaning. And, as having such, it admits of the application of inquiry and argument, and is susceptible of being either affirmed or denied; and we leave it to the reader to determine whether the facts and circumstances which have been brought up in reference to it admit of any possible explanation, except on the ground of its undoubted truth.

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## CHAPTER VI.

## THE LAW OF CAUSALITY AS APPLICABLE TO THE WILL.

§ 102. *Of certain laws or principles which extend to all classes of objects.*

THERE yet remain some particulars, in respect to which we may perhaps find it profitable to pursue this general subject a little further. It is well known that there are certain laws which do not originate in the nature of the Will, nor is it easy to say where they do originate, except it be in the Divine Mind itself; but which, nevertheless, we suppose to be applicable to the Will's exercises. The laws to which we now have reference are of a high and peculiar character, and on various accounts are worthy of particular attention. They are understood to apply, unless any should undertake to find an exception in the Will, to all objects and all classes of objects whatever.

The first law of this kind which we propose to consider, may be denominated the law of Causation or Causality. Expressed in the more common form, the principle of law which we now refer to is simply this. **EVERY EFFECT HAS A CAUSE.** But, stated in language more explicit, and less liable, as we apprehend, to misconception, it may be given as follows. **THERE IS NO BEGINNING OR CHANGE OF EXISTENCE WITHOUT A CAUSE.**

§ 103. *A belief in the law of causality founded in the peculiar structure of the human mind.*

If the principle, (OR PRIMARY TRUTH, as it may well be denominated,) that *there is no beginning or change of existence without a cause*, were examined in all its bearings, and with much minuteness of detail, the examination would spread itself over the pages of a volume. Without proposing, however, to enter into the subject at much length, which would be inconsistent with our limits, we shall proceed to offer a few remarks which may tend to its illustration.

In explanation of the great law of Causality, our first remark is, that the human mind is so constituted, that all events and all objects of knowledge whatever are made known to it in *time*. And, in connexion with this remark, we may add, there is no apprehension or knowledge of time, (we speak now of the human, and not of the divine intellect,) except by means of *succession*. It seems to be universally admitted by those who have given special attention to the inquiry, that the *occasion* on which we have the idea of duration suggested or called forth within us, is *SUCCESSION*; particularly that succession of thought and feeling, of which we are conscious as taking place internally. Hence the structure of the human mind requires, (what, indeed, a constant experience also teaches us,) that all those objects of knowledge, which in the view of the mind have a distinct and separate existence, should be contemplated as successive to each other; in other words, all the distinct objects of knowledge, of whatever kind, arrange themselves as antecedents and sequents. Hence it happens that we are led, at a very

early period, to frame the ideas of antecedence and sequence, since nature from the very first is *necessarily* (that is to say, by virtue of our mental constitution) presented to us and pressed upon our notice under this aspect. It is different with the intellectual perception, the mind of the Supreme Being, who is not necessitated to become acquainted with objects in this peculiar form or mode; but perceives all events and all objects of knowledge *simultaneously*, and spread out before Him, as it were, on a map.

It seems obvious, therefore, that the basis of the belief which is accorded to the great law of Causality is deeply laid in the peculiar structure of the human soul. The law not only exists, (that is to say, it is not only a great principle in nature, that all facts and events arrange themselves as antecedents and sequences, and sustain the relation of cause and effect,) but the structure of the mind itself is such that it naturally, and, as it were, with its earliest breath, imbibes a knowledge of it.

#### § 104. *Of the universality of belief in the law of causality.*

Accordingly, from the earliest period of our lives, we are naturally led, by the inherent and permanent tendencies of our mental constitution, to contemplate objects in this way. All objects which are both distinct and separate in themselves, and are contemplated separately from each other by the mind, necessarily pass before the intellectual view in *succession*. They appear and disappear, one after another, in a sort of perennial movement, arising in the course of the mind's action from darkness to light, and then again waning into evanescence, and wrapping themselves in clouds

It is in this way we are made acquainted with the general idea of succession. But this is not all. By a careful observation of what takes place both within and around us, we are soon enabled to distinguish one succession from another ; that succession, for instance, which is unfixed and variable, from that which is always the same. In other words, we soon ascertain from our experience that certain facts and events are preceded by other fixed and invariable facts and events, and that the former never take place without the antecedent existence of the latter. This is the universal experience in regard to a great number of facts and events, viz., that they are thus invariably connected together. And it is this form of our experience in particular, from which no one is exempt, which furnishes the occasion of the universal and unalterable belief, arising naturally and necessarily in the human mind, and existing in all ages and places in the world, that every *effect*, meaning by the term whatever takes place or begins to exist, has a *cause*. We say, existing in all ages and places of the world, for this undoubtedly is found to be the simple and real fact, so far as any inquiry has been made on the subject ; and which is ascertained so extensively as to warrant the further extension of it by analogy to every human being. This proposition, which may be termed the law of CAUSALITY, is one of those transcendental or primary truths which lay at the foundation of all knowledge. The belief which is involved in it is unprompted, spontaneous, and original ; it is the necessary growth of the mind's action, in the circumstances in which we are placed ; and so far from being the result of reasoning, which is the foundation of so large a portion of our knowledge, it is entirely antecedent to it, and is to be regarded as one of those things

on which the reasoning power itself essentially depends, as one of its primitive and indispensable bases.

*§ 105. Of the classification into Preparative and Effective causes.*

It is true that men, after a time, learn to comment on this fundamental proposition, and to make distinctions. After their increased experience has enabled them to draw the line between the things animate and inanimate, material and immaterial; and especially after they have learned more fully the nature and the appropriate residence of that great element of mind which we denominate Power, they begin to make a distinction, which, undoubtedly, is a well-founded one, between efficient or effective causes, which imply the exercise of *power*, and other causes, which furnish merely the preparation or occasion of what follows.—These two classes of causes, therefore, might not improperly be denominated and characterized, in order to aid in distinguishing them from each other, respectively as Preparative and Effective causes. Certain it is, that such a distinction is to be made; and that without it the fundamental principle of the universality of causation does not hold true. Both of these classes of causes imply the notion of invariable antecedence; but they differ in this. Preparative causes (if, for the want of a better term, we may be permitted so to call them) furnish merely the ground or occasion of what is to follow; while Effective causes imply not only the ground or occasion of what follows, but the actual efficiency or power which brings it to pass. Effective causes have power in themselves; while Preparative causes only furnish the appropriate and necessary occa-

sions, on which the power, that is lodged somewhere else, exercises itself. Both classes are prerequisite and necessary to their appropriate results or effects ; but the one class, having efficiency in itself, is strictly operative, and may be considered as actually making or bringing to pass the effect, whatever it may be ; but the other class, which is destitute of efficiency in itself, is merely the preparatory circumstance, occasion, or condition, on which what is called the effect, either in virtue of its own power or some attendant power extraneous to itself, invariably takes place.

§ 106. *Nature of Preparative and Effective causes.*

It might, perhaps, be proper, in this place, to illustrate briefly the distinction between the two classes of causes which have been mentioned.—We proceed to say, therefore, that all natural or physical causes are, in themselves, and considered in their own nature, merely Preparative, and not Effective. That which is Effective implies power ; and power is an attribute of mind, but not of matter. The rain, for instance, is a Preparative cause of the growth of corn. The corn will not grow without it. But the Efficient or Effective cause is the power of God, exerted, in accordance with his own instituted order of things, to render the rain available in the product and growth of the plant.—So the ploughing of the ground and the sowing of the seed are Preparative causes ; and without them the product, whatever it is, does not make its appearance. Nevertheless, the Effective cause, which is always an attribute of mind, must attend them.

Both classes of causes are found to exist in the human mind. We propose, for instance, to go to a certain place ;

and not only this, we have a DESIRE to go. The desire, in this case, is the Motive or Preparative cause to the volition ; which volition, in its turn, is the Effective cause to the act of going forth. So that volition is so placed, in the economy of things, as to sustain, not only the twofold relation of antecedence and sequence, but to involve in itself, and that, too, in entire consistency with the unity of its nature, the twofold element of dependence and power, of subordination and control. This is a very remarkable trait in volition ; and there have been a multitude of disputes in consequence of not understanding it.

We desire to say further, it is important to keep in mind the distinction which has been made between these two classes of causes, the Preparative and Effective. It is with this distinction in view, and not otherwise, that we assert the universality of causation ; in other words, that every effect has a cause. And accordingly, we repeat, that it is the universal belief of men, evinced alike by their words and their conduct, that without a cause there is neither any beginning nor any change of existence.

#### *§ 107. Opinions of various philosophers on this subject.*

Probably on no topic whatever can we find a greater agreement and a more decided concurrence of testimony, than in respect to the fundamental proposition now before us. We shall here introduce to the notice of the reader some passages which will show that this remark is not unadvisedly made.

ARCHBISHOP KING.—In the celebrated Treatise of this learned and acute writer on the Origin of Evil, we find it maintained in a number of passages, that, although there is a great First Cause or original and uncreated Active

Principle, all other things whatever, whether material or immaterial, are dependent upon, and are connected with, that original Active Power, in the unbroken chain and succession of effects and causes, however remote that dependence and connexion may be. "We are certain," he remarks in his inquiries concerning the First Cause or God, "that all other things come from this Active Principle. For nothing else, as we have shown before, contains in itself necessary existence or active power, entirely independent of any other. As, therefore, itself is from none, so *all others are from it*. For from hence we conclude that this Principle does exist, because, after considering the rest of the things which do exist, we perceive that they could neither *be* nor *act*, if that had not existed and excited motion in them."\*

DR. CLARKE.—In the Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God, we find the subject under examination referred to by this distinguished writer in the following terms.—"It is absolutely and undeniably certain, *that something has existed from all eternity*. This is so evident and undeniable a proposition, that no atheist in any age has ever presumed to assert the contrary; and, therefore, there is little need of being particular in the proof of it. For, since something now is, it is evident that something always was: otherwise the things that now are must have been produced out of nothing, absolutely and without a *cause*; which is a plain contradiction in terms. For to say a thing is produced, and yet that there is no cause at all of that production, is to say that something is *effected*, when it is *effected by nothing*; that is, at the same time when it is not *effected at all*. Whatever exists has a *cause*, a reason, a ground of its exist-

\* *Essay concerning the Origin of Evil*, ch. i. § iii.

ence; (a foundation on which its existence relies; a ground or reason why it doth *exist* rather than *not exist*;) either in the necessity of its own nature, and then it must have been of itself eternal; or in the will of some other being, and then that other being must, at least in the order of nature and causality, have existed before it.”\*

**LORD KAMES.**—“That nothing can happen without a cause, is a principle embraced by all men, the illiterate and ignorant as well as the learned. Nothing that happens is conceived as happening of itself, but as an *effect* produced by some other thing. However ignorant of the cause, we notwithstanding conclude that every event must have a cause. We should, perhaps, be at a loss to deduce this principle from any premises by a chain of reasoning. But perception affords conviction, where reason leaves us in the dark. We perceive the proposition to be true. And, indeed, a sentiment common to all *must be founded on the common nature of all.*”†

**MR. STEWART.**—“It may be safely pronounced to be impossible for a person to bring himself for a moment to believe, that any change may take place in the material universe without a cause. I can conceive very easily that the volition in my mind is not the efficient cause of the motions of my hand; but can I conceive that my hand moves without any cause whatever? In the case of every change around us, without exception, we have an irresistible conviction of the operation of some cause.”‡

**DR. DWIGHT.**—“The mind cannot realize the fact, that existence or change can take place without a cause.

\* Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God, Prop. i.

† Principles of Morality and Natural Religion, Lond., 2d ed., Essay iii.

‡ Stewart’s Philosophy of the Moral and Active Powers, book iii., sh. ii., § i.

This is, at least, true with respect to *my own mind*. I have very often made the attempt, and with no small painstaking, but never been able to succeed at all. Supposing other minds to have the same general nature with my own, I conclude that all others will find the same want of success. If nothing had originally existed, I cannot possibly realize that anything could ever have existed.”\*

#### § 108. *Opinions of President Edwards on this subject.*

In addition to these respectable testimonies, without referring to a multitude of others not less explicit, we may adduce that of President Edwards, as it is found in his able Inquiry into the Will; and which is the more valuable, as it comes from a writer not only of the most distinguished ability, but who had given particular attention to this very subject.—“Having thus explained,” says President Edwards, “what I mean by *cause*, I assert, that nothing ever comes to pass without a cause. What is self-existent must be from eternity, and must be unchangeable. But as to all things that *begin to be*, they are not self-existent, and therefore must have some foundation of their existence without themselves.—That whatsoever begins to be, which before was not, must have a cause why it begins to exist, seems to be the first dictate of the common and natural sense which God hath implanted in the minds of all mankind, and the main foundation of all our reasonings about the existence of things, past, present, or to come.

“And this dictate of common sense equally respects substances and modes, or things and the manner and cir-

\* Dwight’s Theology, Sermon i., on the Existence of God.

cumstances of things. Thus, if we see a body, which has hitherto been at rest, start out of a state of rest and begin to move, we do as naturally and necessarily suppose there is some cause or reason of this new mode of existence, as of the existence of a body itself which had hitherto not existed. And so, if a body which had hitherto moved in a certain direction should suddenly change the direction of its motion; or if it should put off its old figure and take a new one, or change its colour, the beginning of these new modes is a new event, and the mind of mankind necessarily supposes that there is some cause or reason of them.”\*

§ 109. *Results of a denial of the law of causality.*

One or two remarks remain to be made, showing the importance of the doctrine we have been considering.—FIRST. Our belief in an external, material world is, in some degree, founded upon it. We have, for instance, the various sensations of taste, smell, sound, touch, and sight; but it will be noticed that, in themselves considered, they are purely internal, and are as much attributes of the soul as the emotions of cheerfulness, and joy, and sorrow, and wonder. It is to be noticed further, that, as matters of consciousness, we take cognizance of their mere existence, and of nothing more than their mere existence,

\* Edwards's Inquiry into the Will, part ii., § iii.—A number of other American writers, of less celebrity undoubtedly than Presidents Edwards and Dwight, but still of great weight, have maintained the principle under discussion. See, among other works, Dr. Stephen West's Essay on Moral Agency, part i., § v., vi.; and Dr. Burton's Essays on some of the First Principles of Metaphysics, &c., Essay xiii.—See also, in connexion with this subject, a recent English Work of Dr. Abercrombie, entitled, Inquiries concerning the Intellectual Powers, part ii., § ii.

till the great law of Causality, which has established itself in our convictions from the first dawning of the intellect, and which constantly presses itself on our notice, leads us to inquire, Whence come these sensations? What is it that fills us with sensations of sound, and develops in the soul these visions of visible form and beauty? It is thus we are led to seek the grounds of these inward sensations in outward objects, and to recognise and admit the existence of a world of matter. So that if men could be made to believe that there may be effects without causes, and could thus disconnect their inward sensations from all outward antecedents, they might consistently regard all other existences as identified and embodied in their own, and pronounce everything which seemed not to be in themselves mere unsubstantial images, chimeras, and illusory appearances.

SECOND. If we deny and reject the law of Causality, it does not appear how we can prove, in that case, the existence of the Supreme Being. The Apostle assures us, that the invisible things of God, even his eternal power and Godhead, are made known from the things which are created. And who, it may be asked, is able to cast his eye over the expanded face of nature, decorated with countless forms of life and beauty, without everywhere reading the stamp and signatures of a higher Power? We reason upward, from the things which are made to the Maker. But the process of reasoning which we thus employ in proof of a Divine existence from the works of nature, must evidently have some foundation, something to rest upon. Nature presents the facts, and the facts merely, and not the fundamental principle, that is necessary to render them available in a process of reasoning. And what is this fundamental principle? What is it that

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sustains the reasoning process?—In answer to this inquiry, all we can say is, that its basis is in this very proposition which we have made the subject of our consideration; in the great and fundamental truth of causation. And without that truth, the argument has not an inch of ground on which it can support itself. But if, on the other hand, it be true, that every effect has its cause, then may the universe of effects around us, bound together as it is by the evidences of a pervading unity as well as expansive and pervading wisdom, justly claim for itself, in its creation, the agency of a Supreme Being, and thus lead our belief upward from the things that are made to the conception and belief of the great author of them.

THIRD. If we deny and reject the doctrine of Causality, we are not only unable to prove the existence of the Deity, but there is, in fact, no Deity whose existence is to be proved.—The term Deity, in the sense commonly attached to it, includes particularly the ideas of Omniscience and Superintendence. But obviously, if the doctrine of Causality be not true, there is no basis whatever either for the one or the other of these attributes of the Supreme Being. If effects can take place without causes; if events can happen without being connected in any way with anything antecedent, then there is evidently no tie which can effectually unite them, either with the Divine mind or with any other mind. They stand insulated and apart from everythin else; they come and go, through the great and universal ordering and arrangement of things, like strangers from an unknown land, whose advent and departure are alike beyond all anticipation and knowledge. The vast and boundless empire, of which God stands at the head, would be flooded by events in which he would have no agency, and of which he could have

had no antecedent conception. Instead of the harmony and unity, which now everywhere exist and everywhere diffuse happiness, there would be the return of chaos; a universal breaking-up of the established system of things; the reign of chance and tumult, of confusion and discord. But the law of Causality hushes the confusion, arranges the discordant materials, and brings everything into order.

*§ 110. Application of the views of this chapter to the will.*

Our object in introducing the views of this chapter, although they are interesting topics of consideration in other respects, must be obvious. They apply directly to the will; and, if we do not misapprehend their bearing, they decisively support the doctrine, that the Voluntary power, whatever may be true in respect to its freedom, is still NOT EXEMPT FROM LAW. If there be any primary element of human reason whatever, any undoubted and fundamental truth evolved from the very structure of the mind and exacting a universal assent, it is the one under consideration. But if the Will is exempt from the superintendance of all law, if its acts have respect to no antecedent, and are regulated by no conditions, then this fundamental proposition is not true, and has no existence. But if, on the other hand, in compliance with the dictates of our nature, and the indispensable requirements of our situation, we adhere to this truth in all that unlimited length and breadth which constitutes its value, we shall, of course, assign to every act of the will a Cause.

Let it be noticed, however, that we do not specify here the precise nature of the cause. We use the term cause here, as we have done in all that has been said, in its broadest sense, as meaning, according to the nature of

the subject spoken of, either the mere antecedent occasion or the antecedent combined with power ; as expressing either the Effective cause, which truly *makes* the sequence, or the Preparative cause, which is merely a *condition of* the existence of such sequence. In the language of President Edwards, who endeavoured to prevent his being misunderstood, by taking particular precautions in respect to this term, we employ it “to signify any antecedent, either natural or moral, positive or negative, on which an event, either a thing, or the manner and circumstances of a thing, so depends, that it is the ground and reason, either in whole or in part, why it is, rather than not, or why it is as it is, rather than otherwise.”\* In this comprehensive sense of the term, we hold it to be undeniably true, that there is no act of the will, no volition without a cause. And this being the case, it is, of course, implied that the Will itself, from which the act or volition originates, is subject to some principles of regulation ; in other words, HAS ITS LAWS.

### § 111. *Of the common and practical application of these views.*

That the law of Causality is applicable to the Will, is a dictate of common experience and of common sense, as well as the result of philosophical analysis. Accordingly, it will be found, that in all our estimates of human character, as it has developed itself at any former time, we take this law for granted. And this, too, not only in its more general application to all things which begin to exist, but in its application to the human Will. If, in any case whatever, we ascribe merit to a man, or charge him

\* Edwards's Inquiry into the Will, part ii., § iii.

with crime, we necessarily involve that his conduct, which is the basis of our judgment, was not accidental, but had its antecedent, its cause, its motive.

This is particularly true of History. All history may be considered under two points of view, viz., Statistical and Philosophical. So far as it is statistical, it is merely a collection of facts, and does not involve the application of the law of Causality to the Will; but, so far as it is philosophical, which is the higher and nobler aspect in which it presents itself, it involves it continually. To know how men acted may indeed be a matter of interest; but to know *why* they acted as they did rather than otherwise, is, to the sober and philosophic inquirer, a matter of still greater interest. But whenever we put the question why they acted in any given manner rather than another, we necessarily imply that there are principles of action, and that every action has its cause. And this, of course, involves the application of the law of Causality to the human Will.

Hence the propriety and philosophic good sense of Mr. Hume's remarks.—“Would you know,” says this writer, “the sentiments, inclinations, and course of life of the GREEKS and ROMANS? Study well the temper and actions of the FRENCH and ENGLISH. You cannot be much mistaken in transferring to the former *most* of the observations which you have made with regard to the latter. Mankind are so much the same, in all times and places, that history informs us of nothing new or strange in this particular. Its chief use is only to discover the constant and universal principles of human nature, by showing men in all varieties of circumstances and situations, and furnishing us with materials from which we may form our observations, and become acquainted with the regular

springs of human action and behaviour. These records of wars, intrigues, factions, and revolutions, are so many collections of experiments, by which the politician or moral philosopher fixes the principles of his science; in the same manner as the physician or natural philosopher becomes acquainted with the nature of plants, minerals, and other external objects, by the experiments which he forms concerning them. Nor are the earth, water, and other elements, examined by ARISTOTLE and HIPPOCRATES, more like to those which at present lie under our observation, than the men, described by POLYBIUS and TACITUS, are to those who now govern the world.”\*

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## CHAPTER VII.

### THE LAW OF UNIFORMITY AS APPLICABLE TO THE WILL.

#### § 112. *Belief of men in the continued uniformity of nature's operations.*

ANOTHER principle or law of practically universal application, one which, like the preceding, is considered fundamental to the due exercise of the reasoning power in the ordinary occasions of its exercise, and the truth of which seems to be universally admitted, is this, *that there is a permanency and uniformity in the operations of nature.* When we assert, as we cannot hesitate to do, that this principle is accordant with the common belief of mankind, and that it is universally admitted, we are not aware of

\* Hume's Inquiry concerning the Human Understanding, Essay viii.

asserting anything more than what is obvious every hour in the ordinary conversation and conduct of men. Is not such the case? Does not the slightest observation show it? All men believe that the setting sun will arise again at the appointed hour; that the rains will descend and the winds blow, and that the frosts and the snows will cover the earth, essentially the same as they have done heretofore; that the decaying plants of autumn will revive in the spring; that the tides of the ocean will continue to heave as in times past; and that there will be the return and the alternation of heat and cold; and that the streams and rivers will continue to flow in their courses. Their conduct clearly proves, in all these cases, and in all instances analogous to them, the existence of a belief in the principle of uniformity above mentioned, which seems deeply founded, constant, and unwavering in the very highest degree. If they doubted, they certainly would not live, and would not act, and would not feel, as they are now seen to do. It is with this belief that they lie down amid the evening shadows and sleep in quietness; it is with this belief they arise in the light of the morning, and till the reluctant earth in the sweat of their brow; it is with this belief that they store their minds with knowledge which, without the belief, they could never imagine to be at all available to them; it is under the control of the same immovable conviction that they rear their habitations, and provide, in various ways, for the good and the evil, the joys and the sufferings of the future.

We are desirous of not being misunderstood in the statement of this great practical and fundamental principle. This principle, although it is an elementary and fundamental one, seems to be, in some sense, subordinate to the law or principle of causality. The latter partakes

more of a transcendental nature. We not only fully believe it, but it is impossible *not* to believe. It is as impossible for us to believe that existences can be brought into being without a cause, or, in other words, that nothing can produce something, as to believe that the part is greater than the whole. But in respect to the other principle, although we are so constituted as fully to believe the affirmative, we do not necessarily believe the absolute impossibility of the negative. In other words, while, by our very constitution, we believe in the uniformity of nature in all its relations and bearings upon ourselves, we do not necessarily preclude the possible interposition of that Being on whom all nature depends. Our belief is undoubtedly subject to that limitation.

§ 113. *This belief exists in reference to mind as well as matter.*

But while the statements now made are assented to, in relation to the material world and outward objects in general, it may be supposed that they do not hold good in relation to the *mind* of man, and spiritual or mental objects. But this is an erroneous supposition. There are no sufficient grounds for maintaining that men intend to limit the application of the principle in question to mere material things; but, on the contrary, they undoubtedly regard it as extending to mind, so far as comes within the reach of their observation, and by analogy to all minds in all parts of the universe. In other words, they believe there is a uniformity in mental as well as in material action. Certainly it must have come within the observation of every one, that men act precisely as if this were the case. It is admitted on all sides that men plant their

grounds in the spring, with the full expectation and confidence that the operations of nature will be essentially the same as they have been, and that vernal labours will be enriched with autumnal rewards. But do they not exhibit a similar confident expectation in their intercourse with each other? Does not the parent till the mind of his child, in the full expectation of a mental harvest? Do not men make promises, and form covenants, and incur responsibilities to an extent and with an assurance which can be explained only on the ground that they regard the law of uniformity as being applicable to mental as well as physical nature? Without this belief, no contracts between man and man would be formed; no business transactions, involving future liabilities and duties, would be carried on; no domestic relationships would be established; but everything would be thrown into utter confusion and perplexity; and even the bonds of society, without which man can hardly exist and certainly cannot be happy, would be loosened and torn asunder. So that the situation and conduct of men may, in this case, be regarded as proofs of what they believe. And, being so regarded, they clearly indicate and prove the general and decided conviction among them, that there is an established and uniform order in the mental operations of mankind, which, if not perfectly analogous, is as much so as the different natures of matter and mind will permit, to the regular course of things which we constantly observe in the physical world.

#### § 114. *Circumstances under which this belief arises.*

It ought, perhaps, to be added, in explanation of this belief in the permanency and uniformity, both of material

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and mental nature, that it does not appear to arise and exist in its full strength at once. It seems to have its birth at first in some particular instance; and then again is called into existence in another instance; and then subsequently in another and another; till ultimately we are led to regard that permanency and uniformity to which it relates as of universal application, with the single exception already referred to, viz., the possible interposition of that great Being on whom all nature depends. As the belief arises in this gradual way, we may well suppose, that, in the early periods of its origin and growth, it is comparatively weak; but it soon acquires great strength; so much so, that every day and hour we do not hesitate to make it the basis of our conduct. Even in our childhood and youth, it had become in our minds a fixed principle, which, in ordinary cases, we no more thought of questioning, than we did the facts of our personality and personal identity. We always looked upon nature, even at that early period, as firm, unshaken, immoveable; as going forth, in all the varieties of her action, to the undoubted attainment of certain definite ends, and as announcing, in the facts of the past, a most perfect pledge of what was to come.

§ 115. *Of the true idea of chance, in distinction from uniformity.*

We cannot hesitate to assert, that the belief in question is accordant with fact. The mind in this respect, as in others, corresponds with the operations and course of things around it. They are mutually adapted to each other. But if others have less confidence in these assertions, we would propose to them to consider a moment

the opposite of the uniformity contended for, viz., contingency or chance. We must either take LAW, which implies a uniformity of operations, or CHANCE, which implies none. There is no other alternative. But what is CHANCE? Does it express any fact or position in knowledge; or have relation merely to the existence of human ignorance? Evidently the latter. And hence it happens, that what is considered and called chance by one, is far from being so considered by another, who has a deeper insight into it. And in all cases whatever, the increase of knowledge will diminish what are considered the domains of chance by those who are incapable of fully exploring them. Some person says, for instance, it is a mere chance whether the American Congress or the English Parliament will pass such or such an act in their coming session. But if this person could fully penetrate the hearts of all the members, their convictions, interests, prejudices, and moral sentiments, it would no longer be chance, but become certainty.

Accordingly, when men assert the occurrence of a thing by chance, it cannot be supposed that they truly mean to assert (for a voice within them, an original impulse of their own nature, assures them of the contrary) that the thing in question happens *without any occasion or reason, and wholly independent of the law of uniformity*. Their notions will perhaps be indistinct, and it is possible they may entertain some such idea at first; but if they will only analyze their thoughts, they will be convinced they cannot, with any sort of propriety, intend to express by it anything more than their own want of knowledge. In other words, when a thing happens by chance, it happens by chance in respect to *them*. That is to say, they are not able to comprehend and explain how it happens; it comes in a way they know not how

and as they can attach to it no law, it has the *appearance* to them of being without law. And it is this appearance undoubtedly, rather than the reality of the absence of causation and of uniformity, which they intend to express when they use the word in question.

### § 116. *Grounds or foundation of this belief.*

It will perhaps be inquired, what is the foundation of the deep belief which so universally attaches itself to the great principle of a permanency and uniformity in nature? To what part of our constitution is it to be referred?—It would, perhaps, be a natural explanation to suggest, that it is founded upon acts of *reasoning*. But, on examination, this does not appear to be the case. We do indeed sometimes speak, as we had occasion to remark on a former occasion, in some such manner as follows: The sun rose to-day, *therefore* it will do the same to-morrow; Food nourished us to-day, *therefore* it will do the same to-morrow, &c.; a mode of expression which seems to imply, that the uniformity of the future is inferred or deduced from the facts of the past by a train of reasoning. But certainly it is not difficult to see that something is here wanting; that a link in the chain of reasoning must be supplied in order to make it cohere; and that, consequently, there is merely the appearance or form of reasoning without the reality. The mere naked fact that the sun rose to-day, without anything else being connected with it, affords not the least ground for the inference that it will rise again; and the same may be said of all similar instances. We cannot, therefore, prove the uniformity in question in this way.\*

\* See some remarks on the Law of Uniformity, and also on that of Causality, in the chapter on Primary Truths, in the first volume.

But if reasoning is not the basis on which it rests, and if we can give no other satisfactory explanation of its origin, (and it does not appear that we can,) all we can say is, that the belief which men so universally have of such uniformity is the *gift of nature*; that it is neither taught to them by a deduction from other principles, nor communicated by any other secondary process whatever; but is produced or arises naturally within them; the necessary and infallible growth and product of their mental constitution. In other words, the very structure of our minds requires us to assume as a certainty and truth, that there will be, in time to come as in time past, this alleged permanency and uniformity in the operations which are going on in the various departments of nature, both mental and material. Certain it is, no one appears to doubt that such will be the case, although no one can bring proof of the fact, except such as is furnished by the irresistible suggestions of his own internal being. So that the principle of uniformity, like that of causality, is something antecedent to reasoning, and not subsequent to it; something beyond and above reasoning, and not dependent on it; one of those original and substantial columns, implanted within us by the provident care of nature, which the reasoning power could never have placed there, but upon which that power, as it does upon the other great principle just referred to, subsequently erects its magnificent structures.

#### § 117. Reference to the opinions of Reid and Abercrombie.

It is proper to remark, that we do not by any means propose these views as novel; nor, on the other hand, do our limits permit us to introduce passages at much length

for the purpose of showing how often and how ably they have been maintained by distinguished writers. We feel at liberty to make but one or two references out of a multitude of others not less explicit.—“In the phenomena of nature,” says Dr. Reid, “what is to be, will probably be like to what has been in similar circumstances. We must have this conviction as soon as we are capable of learning anything from experience; for all experience is grounded upon a belief that the future will be like the past. Take away this principle, and the experience of a hundred years makes us no wiser with regard to what is to come.

“This is one of those principles which, when we grow up and observe the course of nature, we can confirm by reasoning. We perceive that nature is governed by fixed laws, and that, if it were not so, there could be no such thing as prudence in human conduct; there would be no fitness in any means to promote an end; and what on one occasion promoted it, might as probably, on another occasion, obstruct it.

“*But the principle is necessary for us before we are able to discover it by reasoning, and, therefore, is made a part of our constitution, and produces its effects before the use of reason.”\**

Dr. Abercrombie, in a recent philosophical Work characterized by its sober and practical good sense, speaks of certain FIRST TRUTHS, “which are not the result of any process of reasoning, but force themselves, with a conviction of infallible certainty, upon every sound understanding, without regard to its logical habits or powers of induction.” Among these, he expressly and particularly includes “a confidence in the uniformity of nature; or,

\* Reid’s Intellectual Powers of Man, Essay v.

that the same substance will always exhibit the same characters ; and that the same cause, under the same circumstances, will always be followed by the same effect. This, as a first truth, is a fundamental and instinctive conviction.”\*

§ 118. *Application of these views to the will.*

And now let us inquire how the law of Uniformity, which, in all its aspects, is a subject of interesting philosophical inquiry, will apply to the general topic under consideration. Does not the existence of this Law furnish an argument of much weight in respect to the regulation of the Will ? It will be kept in mind, that the Law in question is understood to apply, without exception, to everything whatever, both mental and material, which has properties, attributes, or acts ; subject only, like the law of Causality, to the modification which the nature of the thing or object, to which it attaches itself, naturally implies. And, as thus stated and understood, it is received and maintained by writers of great discernment, among whom Mr. Stewart, who is not apt to commit himself in favour of any position of doubtful strength, as well as Dr. Reid and Dr. Abercrombie, may be included. It applies, therefore, to the human Will.

And this view is in entire accordance with the common sentiments and practices of mankind.—Men, for instance, are constantly operating upon each other, endeavouring, for some purpose or other, to regulate, influence, and control the conduct of others. And what methods do they employ ? It is evident that they cannot possibly control

\* Abercrombie’s Inquiries concerning the Intellectual Powers, part iii., § iv.

the conduct of their fellow-men, except by operating on the Will. And the course which, in accordance with this view, we find them taking, is that of applying promises, threatenings, encouragements, and exhortations. They address these, and other like considerations, to those whose conduct they desire to influence, as *motives*; expecting, as they think they have abundant reason to, that they will be received and have their influence as such. These are the means they employ; and no one is ignorant that in the employment of them they meet with a great degree of success. But if the action of the Will were not regulated by some permanent principles, and particularly if it were not reached and regulated by THE LAW OF UNIFORMITY, it is evident that this could not happen.

§ 119. *Application of these views to sciences having relation to human conduct.*

Looking at the constitution of the human mind in this point of view, we perceive a foundation for some remarks of D'Israeli.—“The aruspex,” says this interesting writer, “the augur, and the astrologer, have vanished with their own superstitions; but the moral and the political predictor, proceeding on principles authorized by nature and experience, has become more skilful in his observations on the phenomena of human history; and it has often happened that a tolerable philosopher has not made *an indifferent prophet.*”

Proceeding to apply this remark of D'Israeli, the import of which is, that, by means of a philosophic notice of phenomena in the past, we may gain a prophetic insight into the future, we may lay down the doctrine that all sciences, which have reference to the conduct of men

prospectively, are based upon the doctrine that the Will is subject to law, particularly the LAW OF UNIFORMITY. Such are the sciences of Moral Philosophy, Political Philosophy, Political Economy, and International Law; the doctrine of Crimes and Punishments; the laws of Commerce and Exchange; and, in general, all sciences and forms of knowledge which involve the prospective analysis and regulation of human conduct. It is the object of these sciences, not only to tell us what men have done in certain circumstances in times past, but what they are expected to do in time to come, what it is their duty to do, and what they will do.

Political Philosophy, for instance, has exhibited almost every possible variety of phasis, and asserted and maintained almost every possible variety of sentiment, according as the writers have been the subjects of free or despotic states, or have been the advocates or opposers of a particular course of policy. The reader will at once call to mind the Republic and other political treatises of Plato, the De Republica of Cicero, the Prince of Machiavel, the Oceana of Harrington, the Leviathan of Hobbes, the Social Contract of Rousseau, the Spirit of Laws of Montesquieu, the Discourses of Sidney, the Federalist; not to mention a multitude of other treatises of greater or less celebrity. It may be the case, that not one of these various treatises fully agrees with another; and it is very certain that in many things they are very variant and conflicting; but still there is in all, at the bottom, this fundamental principle, that human conduct, in its almost endless variety of development, *may be referred to principles inherent in the mental constitution and of universal application.* In this particular, and so far as has now been asserted, writers are in harmony who in other things are infinitely apart; the sla-

vish Hobbes with the patriotic Sidney, and Machiavel and Necker with Montesquieu and Madison.

§ 120. *On the practical tendency of the general doctrine of law in its application to the Will.*

We might carry the view of the subject which now presents itself to our notice into other particulars. We might illustrate it, for instance, from the science of Political Economy, which deals as much, by implication at least, with the constitution of the human mind, as it does with lands, machinery, rents, manufactures, and capital. We might inquire, furthermore, on what principle it is, that the orator who addresses an assembled multitude foresees and estimates with almost entire certainty the results of his efforts. And we should find everywhere very striking evidence of the fact, that the law of Uniformity embraces in its applications the human Will. Perhaps, however, enough has been said, both in respect to the more general doctrine that the will has its laws, and also in the specification and enumeration of them. There remains only a word or two more in respect to its practical applications.

We are not to regard this truth as practically unimportant. Far from it. In a moral and religious point of view particularly, it is one of great value. It is no dis-honour to it, that, while it does not deprive us of freedom, it nevertheless keeps us in subordination. It is in this simple proposition of the Will's subjection to law that we find the golden link which binds us to the throne of God. If my Will is not subject to Law, then God is not my master. And, what is more, he is not only not so in fact, but it is impossible that he should be so.—But, on the

other hand, if my Will is not independent in the sense of being beyond the reach of law, then the hand of the Almighty is upon me, and I cannot escape even if I would. The searching eye of the great Author of all things ever attends my path; and whether I love or hate, obey or rebel, I never can annul his authority or evade his jurisdiction.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### NATURE AND KINDS OF MOTIVES.

#### ¶ 121. *Of motives and their bearing upon the general doctrine of the will's subjection to law.*

IN what has been said hitherto in this part of our work, our efforts have been directed almost exclusively to the single matter of showing THAT THE WILL HAS ITS LAWS. In connexion with the main subject, however, and in illustration of the principal topic of discussion, we have had occasion to point out specifically what some of the Will's laws are. We are aware that, in support of the leading doctrine which has been before us, we have given little more than the outlines of an argument, and that in its details it might have been prosecuted at much greater length. And yet we are unable to renounce the conviction, that it establishes the important position in question, even in the imperfect form in which it has been presented. Certainly, if we did not think so, we should not consider it worth while to advance any further in our investigations; for if we did not feel confident that our own Will is sub-

ject to laws, we could not for a moment indulge the expectation of the accomplishment of any proposed purpose or plan whatever.

In enumerating the laws of the Will, it will be recollected as one of the positions laid down, that the Will never acts, and volitions never exist, except in connexion with Motives. We must here recur to the subject of Motives again, as presenting one of the most interesting and important matters of inquiry in mental philosophy, particularly in the philosophy of the Will. The doctrine of Motives is very closely connected, in a number of respects, with the general doctrine of the Will's subjection to law. In fact, motives seem to be at the foundation of the laws of Causality and Uniformity, and to reveal very naturally their precise nature and extent.

#### § 122. *Of the division of motives into Internal and External.*

It is necessary, in order to have a thorough knowledge of Motives, to contemplate them in various points of view. Considered, in the first place, in reference to their origin, they are susceptible of being divided into the two classes of Internal and External.—By the INTERNAL we mean motives as they exist in the mind itself, the various forms of the appetites, those higher sentient principles which may be denominated the propensities, and the various kinds and degrees of the affections, together with all motives within us of a moral nature. It is certain, that, in some important sense of the expressions, all motives, at least before they can reach and effect the Will, must exist in the *mind*, although there are grounds for speaking of their antecedent and separate existence in

outward objects.—(2.) By EXTERNAL motives we mean all those which are placed external to the mind, and are *located*, if the expression may be allowed, in outward things. All external objects, which excite within us either approbation or disapprobation, joy or sorrow; all such outward objects as are supposed to have a connexion either with our worldly prosperity or our duty, operate upon us as motives.\* It is true, they influence us through the medium of our mental nature, the emotions, passions, and moral powers; but as the influence exercised may be traced to them as the ultimate subjects, there is a degree of propriety in designating them as motives. Outward motives, in the sense of the term as just explained, are innumerable, presenting themselves to our notice on all sides, in all the various aspects of creation, and in all the endless forms of human enterprise.

§ 123. *External motives derive their efficacy from the mind.*

Although all objects without us, and all external actions may, under different circumstances and in different degrees, exist as motives, still it is impossible for us to regard such external objects or actions as having a value to ourselves or a character of any kind, except it be in reference to those feelings which the contemplation of them

\* NOTE.—External motives may also properly be called Objective motives; as, on the other hand, the Internal might perhaps be called Subjective. Objective motives are what we have in other places described as the OBJECTS of volition. And such is their precise nature. That is to say, they are in themselves mere objects, intellectually perceived, and nothing more. And it is only in connexion with, and in accommodation to certain subsequent mental facts, that they are called motives.



excites in our own minds. Abstracted from the internal feelings, of which they are the antecedents and cause, they are all equally indifferent. It is our own emotions and desires, therefore, reflected back upon all external objects and actions of whatever kind, which infuse into them their qualities of beauty or deformity, of unworthiness or excellence, and give them their power, whatever it may be, in relation to the will.

It would not be a difficult task, it is presumed, to adduce instances illustrating and confirming these views. As an example, a war is announced in Europe, and the merchant winds up his accounts and detains his vessels at home. The war is his motive for so doing. Subsequently there is a false report of war in Europe, which he believes to be true, and he pursues the same course as before. In both these cases, the internal belief, combined with his fears, gives to the motive, as the war would be considered, its whole effect. In the latter case, it constitutes it entirely, as the reported war is only a fiction.

Again, RICHES, whether in the form of lands or of gold and silver, or in any other form, constitute a powerful motive. But it is vain to presume that the common dust on which we tread, or even the brightest masses of ore it contains, inherit and possess in themselves a power to keep men constantly in action, to carry them from land to land, and from sea to sea. It is the mind itself which invests them with attributes that render them so effective. Men see in them the means of the enjoyments they covet; the means of influence among their fellows; the source of honour and power. So that if riches are one of the most efficient motives that can be presented to the human Will, it is the heart, the soul, which makes them so. Since you have only to place the man, who desired them

so much, on his death-bed ; you have only to show him that his piles of treasure can no longer purchase honour, influence, enjoyment, not even an hour of life, not even exemption from a single pain, and then riches are no longer a motive. He turns away from them with feelings of indifference, and possibly of disgust.

*§ 124. The character of motives depends in part on the constitutional traits of the individual.*

Although all objects, which are presented to the mind in the shape and relation of External motives, undergo a modification in their progress towards the region of the Will, it may not be unimportant to remark, that this modification will be very various in different individuals, according to their predominant mental traits. We will suppose, as an example, that the same object is presented to the notice of two individuals ; the one possessed of dull and restricted, the other of quick and comprehensive powers of reasoning. The object may appear diminutive and unimportant to the former, and probably *will* appear so, because his powers of reasoning are not expansive enough to embrace it in all its relations and consequences ; while the same object will appear, for an opposite reason, exceedingly magnified and important to the latter.

And again, select two other persons, whose reasoning powers closely resemble each other, and are, in fact, entirely the same, but whose SENSIBILITIES are constitutionally different ; the one, a person intensely susceptible of vivid and strong emotions and desires ; the other, on the contrary, possessed of a sluggish and phlegmatic temperament. Now we will suppose that the exciting object or motive, whatever it is, comes from the reasoning or in-

tellectual part of their constitution to the sentient or sensitive part with the same dimensions; in other words, as it exists in the *understanding*, and as it passes from the understanding to the heart, it appears to both of these persons precisely alike; but in the former case, that of the man of vivid sensibilities, it at once becomes heated and expanded, as if placed in the focus of a powerful lens; while in the latter it remains cold and withered and torpid, as if under the blighting influences of a wintry frost.

§ 125. *Their character depends in part on temporary influences.*

And this is not all. Every one knows that we are subject to temporary influences, sometimes not easily explicable. At one time we are animated by encouraging aspirations and joyous hopes, and everything is clothed in brightness; and shortly after we are sad and depressed, and all objects appear to be invested with gloom. The motives, which call upon us to resolve and to act, appear very variously under such circumstances. In the season of our joyousness, the light of our minds attaches itself to the various outward objects that are presented before them, and they shine like illuminated points, like guiding stars. In the season of our despondency and sorrow, they fall from the zenith with dimmed or extinguished beams, and we no longer heed them.

And all these various circumstances, and the changes which are consequent upon them, ought to be taken into consideration.—Motives, as they exist outwardly and independently of the understanding, are as different from what they are subsequently, when they have passed un-

der the notice and review of the intellect, as the rich and diversified colours, when they are refracted and separated by the prism, are from the pale and uniform light in which they were previously latent. There is even a greater difference than is implied in this comparison ; for they are not only, at their first appearance in the mind, subject to be altered by the intellect, as to their extent and relations, but in their further progress they seem to be penetrated and inspired with an actual vitality, a principle of life derived from the actual infusion and mingling of the sensibilities. So that, if we may be permitted another illustration from material objects, motives in their modification are as different from what they are in their primitive, outward, or objective state, as the colours of a skilful painter, when they are laid on the canvass in form and proportion, and are made instinct with life and intelligence, are from the same colours when standing crude and massive in his paint vessels.—Such is the transformation to which outward or External motives, as they are denominated, are subject in their progress through the mind ; but the amount and degree of this transformation will not only depend upon the general structure of the mind, but will be found to vary in different persons and under different situations.

*§ 126. Further division of motives into Natural or Personal, and Moral.*

Motives may not only be divided into the two classes of External and Internal, but are susceptible of the yet farther division into the Natural and Moral. NATURAL motives (or Personal motives, as they might perhaps properly be termed) are such, and such only, as are found in the

Natural Sensibilities ; that portion of the mind which we have especial reference to when we use the term Heart. Moral motives are such as are found, and found only, in the Moral Sensibilities ; that portion of the mind which we have especial reference to when we use the term Conscience. Natural motives, therefore, as will be better understood by referring to the distinctions which were made in the volume on the Sensibilities, appear in the general forms of the various Appetites, Propensities, and Affections. They involve, as an essential characteristic, the feeling of DESIRE ; and aim exclusively, even in their most generous and benevolent tendencies, at some form of Natural good. Moral motives, on the contrary, always involve, as their characteristic, the feeling of moral obligation ; and the object at which they aim (irrespective of the claims of interest, either our own interest or that of others) is Moral good or Rectitude. So that, if we thought it necessary to be very specific in our nomenclature, we might call them respectively the Desirive and the Obligative motives. Psychologically, therefore, there is a real and deeply-drawn distinction between these two classes of motives. In other words, it is a constitutional, and not a mere artificial or factitious distinction, introduced without a reference to the real developements and facts of nature.

*§ 127. Further statements illustrative of the distinction between natural and moral motives.*

As this distinction of Motives into the Natural or Personal, and the Moral, (or, more specifically and philosophically, into the Desirive and Obligative,) is evidently an important one, it may be proper to make a few general

statements further, with the hope of throwing some additional light upon them.—We proceed to say, therefore, that Natural or Personal motives operate within a limited sphere appropriate to themselves, and, in general, easily ascertainable. Moral motives, on the contrary, acknowledge no limits short of the universe, eternity, and the boundless range of duties from the finite to the infinite. Personal motives go no farther than to include whatever relates, either in its origin or its results, to ourselves, together with what relates to others, considered as the mere objects of our natural sympathy, affection, or aversion. Moral motives extend themselves to all cases and occasions of action whatever, whether relating to ourselves or others, to the present or the future, to time or eternity; in a word, to every variety and possibility of human action, so far as the action is a voluntary one. Personal motives are in part implanted and constitutional, and of course are, to some extent, instinctive in their operation. Moral motives, on the contrary, removed at the farthest possible distance from anything of an instinctive nature, are not capable of any operation or of any existence independently of the reasoning power; but always exist and act in connexion with that power. Personal motives, so far as they are not properly constitutional or instinctive, but are based upon the deductions of reasoning, always prompt us to act for certain things, as has already been intimated, simply and exclusively because those things appear *desirable*, either for ourselves or others. Moral motives, on the other hand, always prompt us to act for certain things, simply because they are *right*, whatever personal bearing they may have either on ourselves or others. These two classes of motives are not only distinguished by a difference in the range of their

operations, and in the view which they take of objects, but also in the particular of their comparative rank and authority. Personal motives, whether they are selfish or benevolent, whether they prompt us to act for the good of others or our own good, are obviously amenable to the higher authority and control of the moral class. Moral motives are analogous, to some extent at least, to the faith which Christianity exacts from us in the promises of God, since they require men, with an authoritative voice, to go forward in the fulfilment of certain proposed actions, whatever distresses and darkness may beset their path. Men, when called upon to act in view of motives of this kind, are not permitted to inquire whether it would be pleasing to their natural desires and affections, whether their love or hatred is concerned, whether the proposed course of conduct involves their benefit or their injury ; but are presented with the simple and only alternative of acquiescence or resistance, of obedience or disobedience, without regard to the consequences in any shape whatever.

### § 128. *Motives coextensive with volitions.*

In examining the subject of motives, it is one remark obvious to be made, that volitions never exist independently of motives. Whenever there is that act of the mind which we term a volition, there is an antecedent state of the mind, constituting the cause (by which we mean the antecedent condition, preparative, or occasion) of the volition, which we term the motive. By the constitution of the mind itself they go together, and are inseparably connected. In other words, volitions exist upon the occasions which the motives present. Be careful, however,

to remember that they are not *made*, not *created* by these occasions ; but that, in virtue of the power which God has seen fit to impart to the human Will, they exist in connexion with them, and NEVER WITHOUT THEM. But we have already had occasion to refer to this subject, and will not expend time upon a point on which there will probably be found no difference of opinion. Mr. Stewart mentions this as one of the principles on which the conflicting parties on the subject of the Will are agreed. Some of his remarks are as follows.—“ Every action is performed with some view, or, in other words, is performed with some motive. Dr. Reid, indeed, denies this with zeal, but I am doubtful if he has strengthened his cause by doing so ; for he confesses that the actions which are performed without motives are perfectly trifling and insignificant, and not such as lead to any general conclusion concerning the merit or demerit of moral agents. I should, therefore, rather be disposed to yield this point than to dispute a proposition not materially connected with the question at issue. One thing is clear and indisputable, that it is only in so far as a man acts from motives or intentions, *that he is entitled to the character of a rational being.*”\*

This view, that motives are coexistent with volitions, tends to confirm the general doctrine that the Will is subject to laws, and is itself a law. If the existence of motives in some form or other, either personal or moral, either in the shape of our interest or our duty, is the indispensable condition of any action of the voluntary power, it certainly cannot be said, with any degree of correctness, that the action of the Will is wholly a contingent and unrestrained one.

\* Philosophy of the Moral and Active Powers, Appendix i., § ii.

§ 129. *Nature of the influence of motives.*

In consequence of this fixed connexion between the volition and the motive, involving the undeniable fact that the volition is, in some sense of the term, dependent on the antecedent motive, we find, in the use of language, certain expressions and modes of expression, which are deserving of notice, such as, "motives influence the will," "motives govern the will," "volitions are caused by motives," "volitions are controlled by motives," &c. What we wish to observe in respect to these and other equivalent expressions is, that, although in common parlance they may often be convenient, they are to be received with some restriction in all inquiries into the will aiming at philosophical accuracy.

If, for instance, it be asserted that motives *cause* volitions, as it not unfrequently is, we are undoubtedly required, by all sound inquiry, to exclude from the expression the idea of direct efficiency. The causation spoken of is not, properly speaking, *efficient*. The word cause, in this case, (if we wish to announce the fact, and the fact only,) can mean nothing more than the preparatory condition, circumstance, or occasion; a sort of antecedent incident to that which takes place. It is the more important to keep this remark in mind, since, without the qualification implied in it, it may be difficult to perceive how man can be regarded as a free and accountable agent. Accordingly, whenever we speak of motives as influencing, controlling, or causing volition, it is to be understood that we mean merely to express the simple and unquestioned fact of their being conditions preparatory and prerequisite to the will's action. With this import of the terms, we ob-

viously, in such cases, assert that which is true, and which, as a truth, is important to be known and to be realized, and, at the same time, assert nothing which is inconsistent with moral liberty and accountability.

§ 130. *Of the will's being governed by the strongest motive.*

It is sometimes said that the will is governed by the *strongest motive*, and is necessarily so governed; or stated in another manner perhaps less exceptionable, that the will acts in view of the *strongest motive*, and necessarily so acts. Although this proposition, which has the appearance of being a self-evident one, and perhaps is so, has sometimes been adduced, with great confidence, in support of the general doctrine that the will has its laws; it will be perceived that we have not availed ourselves, in the discussion of that subject, of the aid, more or less, which it may be supposed to furnish. We fully believed that there were arguments enough, and more than enough, without relying upon this proposition; saying nothing of the probability that the proposition itself would be found, on examination, liable to some strictures and exceptions. The views we entertain in regard to it are briefly these.

(1.) The epithet **STRONG**, and also its comparative forms **STRONGER** and **STRONGEST**, imply something relative. They unquestionably indicate a comparison with something else which is weak or which is less strong. The proposition, therefore, that the will always and invariably acts in conformity with the strongest motive, acknowledges the idea, and is based upon it, that motives are truly susceptible of a comparison with each other. And this is the fact.—  
(2.) Motives may be compared together in two ways, and

in only two ways, viz., either directly by themselves, or indirectly by means of their results. Accordingly, all motives of the *same kind* (for instance, all those which have been classed together and arranged under the one head of NATURAL or PERSONAL motives, and which are characterized by desire, or, rather, when properly analyzed, are nothing more nor less than DESIRES themselves) are undoubtedly susceptible of a comparison with each other; not remotely merely, but *directly* and *immediately*. The same consciousness, which assures us of the existence of the motives themselves, indicates clearly the difference of their intensity or strength; and we can say with a degree of precision, and with a full understanding of what is meant, that one motive is deeper, or more intense, or stronger than another, when such motives are the sole, exclusive, and direct subjects of comparison.—This is a matter of consciousness. And if all the motives which exist and operate in the human breast were the *same in kind*, it would also be a matter of consciousness, and, as such, it would be a primary and undeniable truth that the acts of the Will are always in conformity with the strongest motive. The proposition then would have meaning and be unanswerable; and, to the full extent implied in these remarks, such is the case at present. But still it is not a universal one, and it therefore seems to us to be defective, when brought as an argument in illustration of the absolute and universal nature of the Will.—(3.) Motives which belong to different classes or kinds (for instance, the class of PERSONAL and the class of MORAL motives) are not the subjects of direct comparison. They are radically and entirely distinct from each other; and there is no more possibility of their being brought into direct juxtaposition and comparison, than there is of other

things entirely distinct from each other, such as association and belief, memory and perception, sympathy and hatred, or a circle and a square, red and white, &c. As natural motives can be analyzed into desires, so moral motives can be analyzed into *feelings of moral obligation*. And can anything be more different, not merely in degree, but *kind*, than mere desires and feelings of obligation? The way, then, and the only way, in which we can compare MORAL motives with NATURAL OR PERSONAL motives, (or, to speak more specifically and accurately, the Desirive motive with the Obligatory or Obligative,) which are entirely distinct from each other in kind, is through the medium of their bearing and results upon the Will. If the Will acts in conformity with the moral motive, we say that the moral motive is the strongest; if it acts in conformity with the personal motive, we assert the reverse. But if the result (that is to say, the *volition*) is the measure of the intensity, when motives, differing in kind, are compared together, then, in all cases of this description, to say that the Will is governed by the strongest motive, is an *identical* proposition, and imports the same as to say that the Will is governed by the motive by which it is governed.

If we reflect carefully upon the foregoing statement, we shall undoubtedly find it to be so. When one motive is designated as the strongest, in comparison with another differing in kind, it is because the will acts in conformity with such motive. In all such cases, therefore, the strength of the motive is not a thing which is ascertained and measured in itself through the medium of our consciousness, but is relative to the fact of the Will's being *governed* by the motive, as it is commonly expressed. But if the fact of the Will's being governed by a particular

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motive, and that circumstance alone (which seems at least to be the case in respect to all motives *differing in kind*) ascertains such motive to be the strongest, then certainly the declaration that the Will is governed by the strongest motive, is, in effect, the same thing as to say that the will is governed by the motive by which it is governed. And it is self-evident that such a proposition, which may be resolved into one of still greater celebrity, viz., **WHATEVER IS, IS**, can prove nothing in respect to the true and universal nature of the Will.

### § 131. *Of the elements of the contest within.*

What has been said in this Chapter, opens, in various respects, an impressive and fruitful view of man's character. We find in the two classes of motives, the natural or PERSONAL on the one hand, and the MORAL on the other, in the strivings of Desire and the pressures of Obligation, the basis of an internal hostility, renewable every day and every hour. Every man's bosom may be regarded as a species of moral battle-field continually set in array. Here is the fountain of sweet and of bitter waters. Here is the theatre of that contest which the Apostle so feelingly describes, "a law in the members warring against the law of the mind;" and which, in its dark and trying moments, compelled him to cry out in anguish, "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Here is the seat of virtues, which assimilate us to angels and prepare us for glory; and of vices, which liken us to spirits of darkness, and are the forerunners of everlasting shame and contempt. Principles of eternal opposition, the Oromazes and Arimanus of the enigmatical philosophy of the Persians, are shut up to

gether, destined to contend with a strife which cannot cease, till the one or the other is brought into subjection.

This statement is not more philosophically than historically true. The history of the human race, as well as the philosophy of the human mind, sustains it. And it is this view which is given more or less clearly in every part of the Bible, from the temptation and the sin of Eden, to the history of the Seven Churches of the Apocalypse. It must be obvious, even to the most casual observer, that men are everywhere represented in the Scriptures as endowed with capacities of right and wrong, of moral good and evil; as placed in a state of probation and trial, which is preparatory to another state of existence; and as exhibiting in their hearts and lives, at one time, the predominance of vice, and at another, the ascendancy of virtue. And it is an interesting consideration, that the eye of God and the eye of angels (to say nothing of the watchful solicitude of the prince and the powers of darkness) is intently fixed on this belligerant attitude, this striving and concussion of the mental elements. And happy is he who fully understands the nature and the consequences of this great contest; the duty and the rewards on the one hand, and the sin and the danger on the other! And thrice happy if he carries on the contest, in all its vicissitudes, and in all its length and breadth, with a humble reliance for wisdom and strength on that Brightness of the Father's glory, who made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and **WAS TEMPTED IN ALL POINTS AS WE ARE, AND YET WITHOUT SIN.**



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**FREEDOM OF THE WILL**

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## CHAPTER I.

### NATURE OF MENTAL FREEDOM.

#### § 132. *Of bodily in distinction from mental freedom.*

HAVING thus, in the second Part of this Work, assigned our reasons in support of the proposition, THAT THE WILL HAS ITS LAWS, and having, in connexion with the main topic, indicated what some of these laws are, we next naturally proceed to consider the subject of its Freedom; a subject of perhaps equal importance and difficulty, and resting upon its own appropriate and specific grounds.—It has sometimes been the method of writers on the Freedom of the will to introduce the subject with remarks in illustration of what may be termed *bodily*, in distinction from *mental* freedom. Although there is no such analogy between mental and bodily freedom as to enable us to diffuse much light from one to the other, it may not be lost time to offer a few remarks in explanation of what is meant by freedom of the latter kind.—Bodily freedom appears to consist in an exemption from any restraint on the corporeal action. So far as we are capable of putting forth any outward action at all, in accordance with some antecedent volition, so far are we in the actual possession and enjoyment of corporeal liberty.—And, on the other hand, inability of corporeal action, where the volition prompts us to make the attempt, may be regarded as a sort of slavery of the body. Accordingly, he who is shut up within the massy walls and doors of a prison,

which he cannot possibly pass ; he who is the subject of a weakening and paralyzing disease, which confines him to his chamber and his bed ; he who is thrown from a precipice, and, in his descent, is obviously incapable of a contrary or upward motion ; and all others in a like situation, whether it be from an abstraction of their personal power or the presence of some outward impediment, may with propriety be described, to the extent of their inability to conform their outward actions to the requisitions of the Will, as destitute of freedom ; or, what is the same thing, as the subjects of necessity or enthralment, in the bodily or corporeal sense of enthralment or freedom.

And this is all we have to say on the subject, because, according to the views we entertain in relation to it, bodily freedom or enthralment, which is a matter perfectly well understood and beyond all reach of controversy, throws no light at all, or, at least, but a feeble ray, upon the nature of the enthralment or liberty of the mind.

### § 133. *Of unsuccessful attempts to explain the nature of freedom.*

Accordingly, for the reason above intimated, it will be understood, that in what we have to say of Freedom, we mean freedom or liberty of the mind. Mental freedom has a nature appropriate to itself ; it possesses an identity and a character of its own ; it stands apart and glorious in its own essentiality ; and is not only an entirely distinct thing, but is as much more important than any mere corporeal liberty as the mind is more important than the body.

In discussing the subject of the freedom of the mind, (a phrase which we use as entirely synonymous with lib-

erty of the mind,) the inquiry first presenting itself is, what are we to understand by the term **FREEDOM**? This is a question which seems to have been asked, and to have elicited more or less attention in almost every age of the world. It is probably no exaggeration to say, that many volumes have been written in illustration of the import of this single term. The prolific suggestions of the imagination, and the ingenious speculations of the reasoning power, have been put in requisition for this purpose. And if, to a considerable degree, all these efforts have proved unsuccessful, may we not suppose that it is owing, in part at least, to mistaken methods of inquiry? Or, perhaps, if right methods have been pursued, the limits, which in the nature of things intercept and restrict their successful application, may not have been fully perceived. Certain it is, whatever flattering anticipations may be entertained, and justly entertained too, of the progress of the human mind, there are some limits which it cannot pass. And perhaps it is a charitable supposition, that many writers on this subject, in consequence of imperfect apprehensions of the boundaries encircling and restricting the efforts of the intellect, have attempted too much, and have therefore failed in satisfactorily establishing anything.

*§ 134. Freedom, considered as an element of thought rather than as a thing in actual realization, is the name of a simple abstract idea.*

We have the authority of Mr. Locke for saying (a position in which he is amply sustained by other writers on the Philosophy of the Mind) that all our ideas may be divided into the two classes of Simple and Complex. Accordingly, when we have fixed our attention upon any

distinct subject of contemplation, and have resolved it into its parts, and have distinctly traced those parts to a position where there is no longer a possibility of a separation of them, we have then reached a boundary of analysis which it is not within the capacity of the human mind to go beyond. The elements of thought, which are disclosed in the issue of such a process, are entirely **SIMPLE**. Truly elementary and ultimate, they are deposited as deeply and strongly in the foundations of the edifice of intellectual perception, as it is possible for them to be. They are to be regarded, therefore, as constituting knowledge, and that, too, of the highest kind, although it is equally true that they are not susceptible of explanation, and that the person, who does not know them of himself and by virtue of his own mental action, can never know them from any other source.

And, in accordance with these views, our first remark in illustration of the nature of **FREEDOM** or liberty is, that the term, when it is used abstractly, and as expressive of an intellectual perception rather than of a thing in actual realization, is the name of a *simple thought or idea*, the knowledge of which we can derive from the mind itself alone. This remark we consider of no small importance, since it has a direct bearing on all attempts at a verbal explanation of the term ; and indicates the possibility of such attempts being utterly futile. In taking this view, which we fully believe to be the only correct one, we are not wholly without the concurrence and authority of other writers. “*La liberté, (says Théry, in a Treatise in the French language on this subject,) est indéterminé même comme tout ce qui est simple, elle ne peut se définir.*”

§ 135. *Occasions of the origin of the abstract idea of liberty.*

But in respect to all abstract notions or thoughts, (and the mere idea or conception of liberty is one of this kind,) there are two questions naturally presenting themselves ; the one just now remarked upon, whether the notion is simple or complex ; the other, what is the occasion on which it arises ? The *occasion*, on which the abstract idea of Freedom is suggested to the intellect and becomes a part of our knowledge, is nothing else than the mind's action itself, in those favoured moments when its operations are *in fact* free. At such times we of course have a consciousness of what is in reality the fact, viz., of the mind's operating in the prescribed sphere of its action, without impediment or hinderance. And it is then that the abstract idea or notion of freedom arises or is *evolved* (if we may be so allowed to speak) by what may appropriately be called the power of Original Suggestion, in the same manner as the abstract ideas of existence, identity, duration, space, intelligence, power, right, wrong, and a considerable number of others.

The fact and realization of our existence is the *occasion*, on which the abstract idea of existence or being in general is brought up, (or to employ what may be called the technical term in the case,) is *SUGGESTED* to the mind. The fact and the realization of power in ourselves is the occasion on which the abstract notion of power, which every one distinctly possesses, is suggested. And, in like manner, whenever there is liberty of the mind in fact and in actual realization, we are so constituted that we are always, and without any effort on our own part, put in distinct possession of the abstract idea of liberty.

*§ 136. Of the undefinableness of the term freedom.*

Now if such be the origin of the abstract notion of freedom, and if it be the name of a simple and not a complex idea, (as certainly there is every reason to believe it to be so,) then every one who speaks of freedom, or enters into a discussion upon it, must be supposed to know of himself what freedom is. Certain it is, if he pleads ignorance of the import of the term, we shall find ourselves wholly unable to make it known to him by any statements in language. It being the name of a simple idea, if we attempt to define it, we must necessarily employ synonymous terms, and which require an explanation no less than the one in question. Every definition of the name of a simple idea, which is not a synonym of the word itself or a synonymous phrase, is necessarily erroneous. Nature and truth never contradict themselves. And if it be true that the idea is simple, then any attempted analysis of it, which goes upon the supposition of its being complex, which is the case with all real in distinction from synonymous definitions, must evidently lead us into some mistake. And as to a synonym or synonymous phrase, it is entirely clear that it cannot give us any new light in the matter; and, accordingly, we are necessarily thrown back upon our own experience for a knowledge of the thing under inquiry.

*§ 137. Supposed definitions of freedom are either mere synonyms, or embrace some element which itself requires explanations.*

It may perhaps be useful to introduce one or two instances of definitions, which have been given by leading

writers on the subject, in illustration and proof of our remark, that the term in question cannot be defined. Mr. Hobbes defines it as follows. "Liberty is the *absence of all impediments* to action, that are not contained in the nature and intrinsic quality of the agent." But the phrase *absence of all impediments* is obviously synonymous with liberty, and conveys no new idea. So that the definition, substituting other terms, amounts to this, and this only, that freedom is that *liberty* to action which is contained in or permitted by the nature and intrinsic quality of the agent.

Buffier gives the following definition. "Liberty is the disposition a man feels within himself, of his *capacity* to act or not to act, to choose or not to choose a *thing*, at the same moment." Here the term **CAPACITY** appears to be the synonymous expression. So that if we carefully reflect upon this definition, we shall probably find it amounting to merely this: Liberty is the consciousness a man has of his *freedom* to act or not to act, to choose or not to choose. And if we suppose the term **CAPACITY** is not synonymous with liberty, it still remains a matter of doubt what precise idea it conveys. And the mind, consequently, remains unsatisfied.

The definition given by Dr. Reid is this. "By the liberty of a moral agent, I understand a **POWER** over the determinations of his own Will." It is difficult to make anything of this definition, because it seems to imply the existence of a Volitive power or Will back of that, whose decisions are the immediate precursors of our actions. If it do not imply this, then all that is meant is, that the liberty of a moral agent is his **POWER** to put forth voluntary determinations or acts of the will. And in that case, **POWER** is the synonymous expression; and, of course,

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gives us no new light in the case. And if it be not so, the difficulty is not at all removed ; for, if we suppose the term power to have a distinct meaning from liberty, that idea or meaning, whatever it may be, is simple and undefinable.

But it is unnecessary to remark further. According to the best reflections we have been able to bestow, it is altogether useless to give a definition of liberty, because it is, in the nature of the case, impossible to do it ; and is unadvisable also, because every supposed definition, so far from settling the subject, has been generally found to leave it open to long controversies and disputes.

### § 138. *Distinction between the idea and reality of liberty.*

But a distinction is to be made, which has already been hinted at, between the mere notion, the abstract idea of freedom, and freedom itself ; between the conception of it as an object of thought, and the possession of it as a reality and a matter of personal experience. We may have the abstract idea of freedom just as we have the abstract conception of power ; and we may reason upon the abstraction of freedom just as we reason upon the abstract idea or abstraction of power, without possessing either freedom or power in ourselves.

The idea of liberty in the abstract is the result, the suggestion, or the creature even, of what is sometimes called the *pure intellect* ; that is to say, it is the result or suggestion of intellectual operations, which appear to be the most disconnected and removed from external material impressions. And as such, it is truly an intellectual entity ; a real and distinct object of contemplation, of knowledge, of reasoning. But, after all, it is to be noticed,

that this is merely the *idea* of the thing, and not the thing itself ; it is the intellectual representative of liberty, but not the experience and the reality of liberty ; it is that which the veriest mental slave may conceive of and may speculate upon, as an object nakedly and coldly suspended in the distance ; but which is very different from that which the person who actually possesses freedom, realizes as a thing near at hand, and enjoys as his own valued and personal possession.

§ 139. *Of the source of our knowledge of liberty itself  
in distinction from the abstract idea of liberty.*

Of liberty in itself, in distinction from the *abstract idea of liberty* ; in other words, of freedom in the actual state of *realization*, we can have a knowledge by Consciousness, and by that alone. If a man (we speak now of the *mind* of man, and not of his body, and of the mind in a condition of mental soundness, and not in a state of either total or partial insanity) truly feels himself to be free, we seem to have no alternative but to take it for granted that he is so. This is something ultimate ; we cannot go beyond nor around it ; being based upon an original and ultimate feeling, it is, of course, founded in one of the deepest and surest sources of knowledge ; and we are under a sort of necessity, therefore, of admitting that the consciousness and the realization, the knowledge and the fact, go together.

And, in connexion with this view, we shall not hesitate to assume, that each one is not only disposed to consult his consciousness, but to rely confidently on its intimations. We make this assumption, because we know of no other way in which it is possible for him, on a subject

of this nature, to arrive at distinct and satisfactory conclusions for himself, or to understand the statements of others. If freedom, in its essence and realization, is what it is known to be in our consciousness, and that, too, without the possibility of its being anything else, then surely, however difficult it may be to give a definition of the abstract idea of freedom, we may enter on the examination of the subject-matter before us with entire confidence, since it is one, according to the view now given, which necessarily comes within the range of each one's personal knowledge.

§ 140. *Of the precise import of the phrase moral liberty.*

We close the suggestions of this chapter with a single remark more.—It is not uncommon to hear persons using the phrase *moral liberty*; and particularly in its applications to man. But the thought naturally arises, what is the distinction between moral liberty and any other liberty? To this inquiry it may be answered, that the phrase moral liberty indicates, not a difference in the essence of liberty or in the liberty itself, which we have reason to believe is the same, so far as it exists at all, in all beings whatever, from the highest to the lowest; but must be understood chiefly to express, in connexion with the fact of liberty, a difference in the capacity or sphere of the mind of which it is predictable. The liberty of brutes is as perfect *in its sphere* as that of men or angels. As they roam in forests and mountain wildernesses, or swim in the depths of the ocean, or fly and gayly sing in the radiant fields of the summer's sky, they are free; they rejoice in their freedom, and prize it as one of heaven's best gifts. But we never think of ascribing to them *moral liberty*,

simply because, so far as we are able to learn, they have not a moral nature as man has. The sphere of man's liberty is enlarged so as to embrace moral considerations, those feelings of approval, disapproval, and moral obligation which are implied in moral accountability. Accordingly, when we speak of man's moral liberty, or of man as morally free, we mean merely to express the fact that man is a free being, the sphere of whose liberty and action is so enlarged as to embrace moral considerations or moral principles of action.

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## CHAPTER II.

### MENTAL HARMONY THE BASIS OR OCCASION OF MENTAL FREEDOM.

#### § 141. *Statement of the inquiry in this chapter.*

WHAT has been said so far, on the general subject of Liberty, relates to the abstract idea of liberty, the origin and nature of that idea, the realization or actual existence of liberty in ourselves in distinction from the mere abstract notion, and the manner in which we have a knowledge of liberty thus existing in ourselves, viz., by Consciousness. It is a distinct inquiry (and undoubtedly one worthy of some attention) what that precise state of mind is, in connexion with which liberty exists. In other words, what are the precise conditions or prerequisites of mind essential to mental liberty? If we are at liberty to suppose, as undoubtedly we are, that there are or may be certain circumstances or conditions of the

mind which are inconsistent with its freedom, it seems natural to follow, that there are other circumstances or conditions upon which its freedom, whenever it exists, is based, or which are essential to it. What are these precise circumstances? What is this precise situation of the mind?

In entering upon this inquiry, we wish to make the remark, which naturally suggests itself as incidental to the main topic, that freedom may exist *IN VARIOUS DEGREES*. It is well known that there may be various degrees in the distinctness of a perception and in the strength of an emotion or desire, while the nature of such perception, emotion, or desire, remains the same. And, in like manner, there may be different degrees of freedom, while the nature of freedom is the same. The intemperate man, in respect to whom we feel at liberty to say that he is partially enslaved to his cups, is obviously less free than one whose appetites have never been vitiated. Nevertheless, in common parlance, we speak of him without any qualification as a free man, so long as he is not absolutely beyond the possibility of self-recovery. Up to this point we consider him both free and accountable. At the same time, it is unquestionably true, that he is less free than others.

This is undoubtedly an important view in the philosophy of the Will. We wish it to be understood, however, that, in the remarks on the subject now before us, viz., the precise circumstances under which Freedom exists, we are speaking of freedom *in the highest degree*, or *the perfection of freedom*. This will be found the easiest and most satisfactory way to obtain precise ideas in relation to it.

*§ 142. Occasions on which liberty exists.*

Returning, therefore, to the main topic of the chapter, we proceed to make a remark which has a close connexion with it. It is this: If men will but carefully inquire and consider, they will not fail to perceive that all things are in harmony, or were designed to be so. There is a harmony of the various parts of the external world; there is a harmony of the parts of the human body; there is also a harmony of the mind; by which we mean, there is a perfect symmetry and adaptation of the parts of the mind, each part being appointed to operate in its appropriate sphere; and, so far as it fulfils the intentions of nature, never infringing upon another part whose sphere of operation is different. Now, when each part operates in this way; when there is truly a harmony of movement, everything being equable, proportionate, and in its proper place; when each power performs its functions without any unavoidable perplexity existing in itself, or any infringement originating from some other source, we are then conscious of liberty in the highest sense of the term.

He, who has no knowledge of liberty at such a time, never will have; and it is wholly useless to reason with such a person on this subject. The consciousness of liberty, which naturally exists under such circumstances, is the only source of our knowledge in relation to it. A thousand mere speculations could never furnish the information which we have from that source; nor could they ever have weight in opposition to the authority of that ultimate tribunal.

§ 143. *Of the circumstances under which this mental harmony may be expected to exist.*

But perhaps it may be objected that these views, however plausible they may be in theory, are useless and nugatory in their application, because there is no rule or measure upon which the internal harmony depends, and to which it may be referred. And certainly there would be something in such a suggestion, if it were well founded. But we think we may venture to say it is not so. It must, however, be admitted, if there is harmony in the mind, there must be more or less of subordination in the parts ; and that, if there is subordination in some parts, there must be ascendancy and control somewhere else. And this leads to the further remark, that it seems to be a proposition, satisfactorily established by writers on mental philosophy, that Conscience is, in some sense of the term, a governing and controlling power of the mind. Harmony, as it is capable of existing and is required to exist in the human mind, is by the appointment of God ; and CONSCIENCE, as the vicegerent of God in the human breast, indicates and rewards the fulfilment of this benevolent purpose.—Conscience, however, is not so much a governing power in the executive as in the legislative sense of the term ; not so much in the capacity of actually carrying into effect, as in the office of guiding, prescribing, and regulating. In the executive sense of the term, the WILL is the presiding and controlling power, while the functions of conscience are more of an advisory and consultative kind. Accordingly, when all the appetites, propensities, and passions are kept within their due bounds, we are reminded of this desirable state of things, and are

encouraged to secure its permanency by an internal approbation ; and, on the other hand, if they exceed those limits, we feel an internal reproof and condemnation. So that, when we assert the harmony of the mental acts to be the true and undoubted occasion on which we are conscious of the existence of mental freedom in the highest degree, it is essentially the same as to say, that the occasion of this consciousness is to be found in a condition of the mental acts or operations, conformed to the requirements of conscience. And as conscience is a principle instituted by God himself, and is designed to intimate his will, we may go further and say, that the occasion on which we are conscious of mental freedom in the highest degree, is to be found in a condition of the mental acts, conformed to the requirements of the Supreme Being.

It is conscience, (of course we mean an enlightened and right, and not a perverted conscience,) which, acting in the name of the great Author of the mind, marks out their respective boundaries to its various powers and tendencies ; which says to this appetite and that desire, to this propensity and that passion, thus far must thou go and no farther ; within these limits your operations are innocent, beyond them are criminal ; within them there is freedom, beyond them there is enthralment.

#### § 144. *Opinions of Bishop Butler on conscience.*

In the Volume on the Sensibilities, particularly the portion on the Moral Sensibilities, we have endeavoured to set the topic of the preceding section in a clear light. A number of English writers have proposed similar views in relation to the comparative subordination and ascendancy of the different parts of the mind and the authority of the

Moral Sense; particularly Dr. Price and Bishop Butler. In his celebrated sermons on Human Nature, Bishop Butler represents conscience as distinguishing between the internal principles of man's heart, as well as between his external actions; as passing judgment both upon the one and the other; as pronouncing, by its own proper authority, some things to be, in themselves, right and good, and others to be evil and wrong.—Some of his illustrations and statements are as follows: "Consider all the several parts of a tree, without the natural respects they have to each other, and you have not at all the idea of a tree; but add these respects, and this gives you the idea. The body may be impaired by sickness; a tree may decay; a machine be out of order; and yet the system and constitution of them not totally dissolved. There is plainly somewhat which answers to all this in the moral constitution of man. Whoever will consider his own nature, will see that the several appetites, passions, and particular affections have different respects among themselves. They are restraints upon, and are in proportion to, each other. This proportion is just and perfect, when all those under principles are perfectly coincident with CONSCIENCE, so far as their nature permits, and, in all cases, under its absolute and entire direction. The least excess or defect, the least alteration of the due proportions among themselves, or of their coincidence with CONSCIENCE, though not proceeding into action, is some degree of disorder in the moral constitution."\*

\* See Butler's second and third Sermons on Human Nature, and the Note.

**¶ 145. Objected that perfect harmony of the mind is not realized in the present life.**

It may be objected, perhaps, that, in view of what has been said, there is no mental freedom at all in the present state of existence ; at least, that there is not the highest degree or perfection of mental freedom ; since it is evident, and is universally admitted, that the harmony of the human mind is, in a great degree, destroyed. It is maintained by the objector that there is a want of mental harmony in the most moral man in society, or even the man who, together with mere outward morality, is the most deeply imbued with the spirit of the Gospel. His love to God does not always possess that intensity and uniformity which ought to be characteristic of it ; his love to his fellow-creatures, although he may be in the main anxious for their good, is subject to variations discreditable to the fervour of his benevolence and offensive to God ; his evil passions are not always suitably rebuked and repressed, but sometimes reign for hours, and even days and weeks. In a word, his bosom is not the placid lake, which the fact of mental harmony would seem to imply, but rather the “ torn ocean’s roar.”

To the general truth of this statement of man’s condition we are obliged to assent. It is too obvious to admit of a denial. And it follows, of course, that the perfection of liberty is but too seldom realized in the present life. If we wish, therefore, to contemplate liberty in its perfection, let us look at God. In that glorious Being all is harmony. In him, wisdom, and benevolence, and justice, and voluntary power are all blended in due proportions ; are all active in their appropriate spheres without any in-

terference, forming a constellation and inseparable cluster of light, without any shades crossing their path, or any darkness at all. And in Him, more than in any other Being, there is perfect liberty. And let us look, moreover, at angels and seraphims, and all the spotless companies and princely hosts that bow in his presence and cast their crowns at his feet, and it is the same. Their souls, although infinitely removed from Him in point of capacity, are yet, in their moral nature and in their more limited sphere, the perfect mirror and reflex of His. And with them also, in that sphere, whatever it may be, which God has been pleased to assign them, there is undoubtedly the brightness and the perfection of liberty.

§ 146. *Perfection of mental harmony and consequent mental liberty illustrated from the character of the Saviour.*

But is there not perfect liberty of the mind on earth ? Adam, before he fell, enjoyed this perfection of freedom. In the second Adam too, the man Christ Jesus, who was tempted in all points as we are, and yet without sin, it existed in the highest possible degree. Follow him in the vicissitudes of his life ; mark him in the various situations of temptation, trial, suffering. See him the son of a carpenter, and himself employed in the calling of his fathers ; see him at a little later period, with his whip of thongs, expelling with righteous indignation the money-changers from the Temple ; see him in the synagogue and in the wilderness, in preaching and in prayer, smitten with the mid-day sun, and chilled with the drops of the night ; behold him with the sorrowful and the rejoicing, at the marriage-feast of Cana and at the tomb of Lazarus ; behold him

mingling with all classes, and anxious for the good of all, seeking to benefit alike the high and the low, the priest in his robes, and the publican sitting at the receipt of customs, the young man of great possessions, as well as such as were halt and blind; behold him praying and agonizing in Gethsemane, and agonizing, and supplicating, and dying on the Cross. It is difficult to conceive of any one who was placed in a greater diversity of situations, and exposed to a greater mixture and contrariety of influences. But in that mind there was entire and perfect harmony. The appetites, the propensities, the affections, (for he had them all, and not only that, he was tried or tempted in them all,) never violated their due boundaries; but always acted in complete uniformity with the law of rectitude implanted in the soul. As there was perfect harmony, there was perfect liberty; and as there was liberty, there was peace; even that peace which passeth understanding.

As Christ is set before us as an example, that we should follow him, we are certainly not to consider it as an impossibility for us to realize in our own souls the same completeness of mental harmony and the same perfection of inward liberty. It is the duty of all to strive to free themselves from the bondage under which they labour, and to secure, with the blessing of God, a restoration to that state from which they have fallen. And who will undertake to say that there may not be a restoration to that state of inward harmony, purity, and peace in the present life; if not through the whole course of a life or even a year, yet in some favoured moments, when the earnest strivings of the creature are blessed by the presence and the aids of the Creator? "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty;" not merely liberty in

heaven, but liberty on earth ; not merely an exemption from ceremonial thraldom, but from the greater load of spiritual thraldom ; and we may add, as we are not authorized to limit the operations of that Spirit of the Lord, so we are not authorized or permitted to deny the possibility, however seldom it may be the case in fact, of the completeness or perfection of liberty. If we are not wholly lovers of God, it is because we are still the lovers of some iniquity ; and if we are not wholly free, it is because we choose not to be so.

*§ 147. Objected that the foregoing views are necessarily, and in their very terms, inconsistent with liberty.*

But it may perhaps be objected, that the subordination of the various parts of the mind to the authority of conscience, which, inasmuch as it constitutes the true harmony of the mind, is the occasion and basis of the actual realization of perfect liberty, is, even in its very terms, a statement of restraint and enthralment. But can we with propriety, when we carefully examine the subject, concede any weight to such an objection ? Everything which exists must have its appropriate nature, and, consequently, its prescribed sphere of action. Subordination, if there be indeed a Supreme Power to whom everything else is amenable, must necessarily be the very condition of existence. It is a very erroneous notion, which supposes that mental liberty necessarily implies insubordination ; as much so as to suppose that there can be no civil freedom without popular licentiousness. Without subordination, secured by some ascendant and permanent principle, each inferior principle and power of human nature would leave its appropriate sphere, and commence an invasion

on that of its neighbour. Such a state of things would necessarily be an infringement upon, and a destruction of, all liberty.

We hold it to be self-evident, that no being, attribute, or faculty can be considered as free in the highest sense of that term, whenever there is a violation of the elements of its nature ; or, what is the same thing, when there is an interruption or hinderance from another source of the natural tendencies of those elements. Now the mind, though it is one and indivisible in its nature, is exceedingly multiplied and complex in its modes of operation ; in other words, in its various perceptive and sensitive powers. And each of these powers, it will be recollect-ed, has its definite limits, and its specific and unalienable character ; that is to say, a nature of its own. But if it be true that they have a nature of their own, it seems to follow that they can be free, and free only, at least in the highest and most ennobling sense of that term, when they are permitted to act in accordance with that nature. Now as every faculty of the mind exists and operates in connexion with other faculties, there must be in the mind some ascendant and authorized power, which can indicate to each its appropriate limits or sphere. And as these spheres of action are adapted to each other with perfect symmetry, there cannot be a transgression or passing over of one sphere, without an invasion of another ; there can-not be an excess of liberty in one, without a diminution of liberty in another. Hence we see, that, from the na-ture of the case, a due subordination in the powers of the mind is not inconsistent with the liberty of each power in itself, and is absolutely essential to the liberty of every other power. And this view seems to us fully to answer the objection above referred to

## CHAPTER III.

## FREEDOM OF THE WILL.

§ 148. *Remarks on the nature of the freedom of the will.*

THE remarks which have been made in the two preceding chapters are, to some extent, of a general nature, being applicable to the mind as a whole, as well as in its parts ; and susceptible of an application not only to the human mind, but to all minds. The whole subject of the nature of Freedom is one of great importance, and it is also one of no inconsiderable difficulty ; and it seemed, therefore, to require those general illustrations. We hope, from what has been said on the nature of freedom in general, that it will be easy to understand what is meant by the Freedom of the will. We do not suppose (and we have already suggested reasons for the remark) that the freedom of the will, when contemplated directly and in itself, either is, or ever will be, a matter of verbal explanation ; no mere form of words can, of itself, fully explain what Freedom is, either when predicated of the Will, or of any other form or action of the mind. But still we trust, that, with the help of the general statements which have been made, it will be found a matter of clear intellectual perception ; and that, if it should elude and baffle the powers of language to express it, it will still be found fully within the comprehension of thought.

It does not follow, because the element of freedom is,

in some respects, of too subtle a nature to be embodied in the massive forms of speech, that it is therefore too subtle and ethereal to be approached and apprehended by the mind. There are many things which are known and are understood, at least enough so for all practical purposes, but which cannot be explained by any statements in language so as to make them clearer. It may be impossible for me to explain, by a mere form of words, what is meant by my *existence*; but I fully know, as everybody else does in respect to himself, what my existence is in experience and in fact. In like manner, it is impossible for me to explain what the Freedom of the Will is in words, but I know what it is in experience and in fact, and have never been destitute of that knowledge, and it is impossible that I should be destitute of it. If the Will were some material object, I could probably explain by words what is meant by its freedom; but as it is immaterial and mental, we are obliged to leave it to each one's internal examination and consciousness.

§ 149. *Of the relation of the freedom of the will to the fact of its subjection to law.*

But the inquiry may arise in the minds of some, How can it be possible that the Will should be free, and, at the same time, subject to law? No doubt some persons fully entertain the idea, that the doctrine of the Will's subjection to law, which is clearly susceptible of accumulated and irresistible proof, necessarily involves that the voluntary faculty is destitute of liberty. But, if we rightly understand the matter, the fact is entirely the reverse of what is here supposed to be the case. The opinion, which, for various reasons, we deliberately and fully em-

brace, is, that, without laws of the mind, there is no liberty of the mind ; neither liberty in fact, nor even a possibility of it. True liberty does not require that we should trample on another's rights, but simply that we should enjoy our own ; and, in order that our own rights and those of others should be enjoyed, it is necessary that both should be placed under some regulation. Law and liberty, therefore, necessarily go together. In the order of their existence, law precedes liberty ; and it is in that order they are most naturally contemplated. Where there is perfect liberty, as we have already had occasion to notice, there is perfect harmony ; but there cannot be perfect harmony, nor harmony in any degree, without law. But it is not necessary to dwell here. The Creator has wisely and kindly taken this matter into his own hands. He has stamped upon the mind in letters of light, so that he who runs may read them, that the whole economy of the mind is subject to the oversight and regulation of permanent principles. And in doing this, he has at the same moment, and by one single act, laid the broad and deep foundations of control and of subordination, of harmony and of freedom.

But we may go further than this, and come more closely to the matter which is directly before us. We may safely take the position, that the Will could not enjoy freedom, either in a higher or less degree, if it were not in *itself*, and considered separately from all other powers, subject to law. If the acts of the Will were guided by no principles whatever, if they were beyond the reach of all superintendence and regulative control, they would necessarily be thrown into the arms of a blind and inflexible destiny.

If it could be shown that the Will is not subject to

law, it would of course follow, that it is the subject of mere contingency and accident, which entirely and fully comes up to the utmost idea of fatality. And it would be found to be a fatalism of the worst kind, an unintelligent fatalism.—But having proved that the Will, as well as the other mental powers, has its laws, we secure in that single fact the possibility of liberty, which we could not have without it. We are, accordingly, in a situation in which the liberty of the Will, that important and noble attribute of a morally accountable nature, is not necessarily excluded, which would certainly be the case if the will were driven about hither and thither, without any possible foresight of what is liable to take place, and without any regularity of action.

§ 150. *Circumstances or occasions under which freedom of the will exists.*

Although, in entering into the subject of the freedom of the Will in particular, in distinction from the general nature of freedom, we do not profess to go into verbal explanations and definitions, something may nevertheless be said in relation to the occasions or circumstances under which it exists.—In respect to the occasions on which the freedom of the Will exists, but little more remains to be done than apply the remarks made on the general subject of freedom in the preceding chapter. If there is perfect harmony in other parts of the mind, there will be perfect freedom in the Will; if every appetite, and propensity, and passion is precisely what it should be, the voluntary power cannot possibly experience any pressure which will interrupt or diminish that degree of liberty which is essential to, or compatible with its nature.

This topic may perhaps be susceptible of illustration by a reference to the Supreme Being. If freedom can, with propriety and justice, be predicated of any being whatever, it is certainly predicateable of the Supreme Being ; and predicateable not only in general terms, *but of the Will in particular*. We hazard nothing in saying, that liberty of the Will is possessed by Him in the highest possible degree. And we cannot conceive how it should be otherwise, when we consider that the elements, both moral and intellectual, by which it is surrounded, are in perfect harmony with each other.—And if we turn our attention to any other high and holy beings, such as are nearest in glory to the Supreme Author of all things, it is the same. The will of angels and of archangels, and of all other orders of holy beings that encircle with their songs of praise the Divine Throne, possesses, within the highest sphere of its action, the highest degree of freedom. All the various elements, which go to constitute them intelligent and moral beings, are restricted to their proper place, and operate in their due proportion. Their perceptions, so far as they go, are in perfect accordance with the truth of things. Their emotions are such as God, who takes supreme delight in perfect rectitude, can entirely approve. Every desire which they exercise is in its right place ; their love to God is just such as it should be ; their love to other holy beings corresponds precisely to the nature of the object towards which it is directed ; their aversion to sin and sinful beings is just such, and fully and entirely such, as is appropriate and right ; and it is precisely the same in respect to every other emotion and desire. And the consequence is, there is no disturbing force in the neighbourhood of the Will ; there is no possible motive to sway it from the line

of perfect rectitude; and hence it is true, that their Will, although it always operates in the direction of the highest rectitude and good, is always at liberty; and this liberty exists, too, in the highest possible degree. And hence we assert, in respect to all minds, whether they are higher or lower in the scale of being, that perfect harmony is the appropriate element of perfect freedom; and that every diminution of harmony will be attended with a corresponding diminution of liberty. And this is as true of the separate parts or powers of the mind as of the whole; and is as true of the Will as of any other part.

§ 151. *Evidence of the freedom of the will from consciousness.*

Having made the foregoing remarks in explanation of the nature of the freedom of the will, and of the occasions on which it exists, we are now prepared to proceed to a consideration of the proofs in support of the position that there is such a freedom. And we accordingly remark, that the doctrine of the freedom of the will is sustained, in the first place, by CONSCIOUSNESS.—When we assert that men have a knowledge of the Freedom of the will by Consciousness, we mean merely to declare, that such knowledge is the result of an inward conviction, an internal experience. In other words, every man knows himself, in the exercise of volition, to be free. It is a knowledge which we possess, not by deduction, but by a species of intuitive conviction; not by inference, but by an original perception.

It may be said, perhaps, that Consciousness has relation, properly speaking, to the mental acts *alone*; and,

therefore, not to Freedom, which is not so much an act of the mind, as an incident to or qualification of an act. In answer to this, it may be said, that Consciousness takes notice of mental acts in their SPECIFIC as well as their general form ; that is, of their distinctive traits, their peculiar aspects, their modifications. And Freedom, considered as a direct subject of consciousness, involves, at least, a peculiar aspect or modification of the mental act.

We will only add, that the argument from Consciousness is as decisive, as it is plain and simple. Some writers, indeed, have even been disposed to rely upon this argument alone. They consider it (and perhaps it may be admitted with entire justice and correctness) as conclusive against any considerations which may be adduced adverse to it. "Our own free will," says Mr. Stewart, "we know by consciousness ; and we can have no evidence of any truth so irresistible as this."

#### § 152. *Of an objection to the argument from consciousness.*

It ought to be noticed, however, that from time to time, a few individuals have been found who have asserted the opposite, viz., a consciousness of internal compulsion or slavery. Surprising as such a declaration is, we are bound in candour to receive it as truly indicating the internal experience of those who make it, although it may be in opposition to the testimony of thousands and even hundreds of thousands to one. But these exceptions do not at all overthrow our argument. If there truly be such exceptions, they can undoubtedly be explained in entire consistency with the general truth, that

the Freedom of the will is ascertained and proved by the consciousness of mankind. Is it not true, is it not accordant with common experience and with the Scriptures even, that any man and every man may enslave himself? And, when that is the case, what could we expect but that consciousness, the true index of what takes place within, should bear its testimony to a state of thraldom? If, then, these persons are not conscious of Freedom of the will, may we not safely say, it is not the work of their Creator, but their own?

Certain it is, if we permit any one of the appetites, propensities, or passions continually to extend and strengthen itself by being continually repeated, it will eventually gain the ascendancy over and subdue all the rest of the mind. If, for instance, a man indulges, year after year, the consuming propensity of AMBITION, it ultimately so disorders the proper action of the mental powers, and acquires such immense strength, that he feels himself driven by a sort of compulsion; he undoubtedly recognises in himself, as he asserts to be the case, the impulse of a species of destiny, which, however, is of his own creation. By his own criminal improvidence, and not by any inward and irresistible fatality, he has lost control of the helm, and is driven forward amid billows and tempests to his destruction.

Such cases undoubtedly exist, but they cannot with propriety be regarded in any other light than that of exceptions to the general rule, and which are susceptible of an explanation in consistency with the general experience of mankind. That experience (the inward testimony or consciousness which the great mass of mankind has) most decidedly testifies to the liberty of the will.

§ 153. *Illustration of the will's freedom, drawn from the nature of motives.*

In order to meet the doubts and perplexities which may arise from time to time in the reader's mind in relation to these difficult and interesting subjects, we wish to recur a moment to some of the laws of the Will which have been enumerated.

FIRST. One of these laws is, that the Will never puts forth a volition, except in reference to an object ; which object is sometimes called the Objective or outward motive, but more properly the OBJECT merely ; that is to say, the object of volition. We remark here, that no one will suppose that this condition or law of the Will's action perplexes, in the least, the doctrine of its freedom.

SECOND. Another condition or law of the Will's action is, that volition cannot exist where there is no belief in the practicability or attainableness of the object, and that, other things being equal, the strength of the volition will be in proportion to the degree of belief. We do not suppose that the admission of this view will be considered as in any degree at variance with the doctrine of the Will's freedom.—And the remark will apply equally well to the additional fact, that the action of the Will does, by its very constitution, always have a prospective tendency.

THIRD. The laws of Causality and Uniformity may be resolved into that of motives. That is to say, if all the Will's acts, in times past, have been regulated by the law of Motives, they have, of course, been conformed to the law of Causality. And if they shall be regula-

ted in all time to come in the same way, they will, of course, be conformed to the law of Uniformity.

In connexion with what has now been said, we proceed further to remark, if there is any difficulty in the mind of any one, we suppose it must be in connexion with the law of Motives. The law of Motives is this. The Will acts in view of motives, and never acts independently of them. In other words, although its acts are truly *its own*, and are to be regarded and spoken of as *its own*, yet Motives furnish the condition or occasion (and, we may add, the *indispensable* occasion) on which the ability to put forth those acts is exerted.

The question, then, arises here, Does the law of Motives necessarily perplex the doctrine of the Will's freedom? We think not. It is particularly worthy of notice in respect to this Law, that we are obliged to rest satisfied with it, as it comes to us *in its general form*, and as it is stated in general terms, without the ability of going within the circle it draws around the Will and seeing it carried into effect in particulars, in such a way as to render the action of the Will a fixed and necessary one in any particular direction.

#### § 154. *Remarks in continuation of this subject.*

The closing remark of the last section will be better understood by briefly recurring to some views which have already been taken. We refer to the important fact, that Motives, although they are the necessary conditions and preparatives of the Will's action, are oftentimes essentially different from each other, being various in kind as well as degree, *so much so as not to admit of a direct comparison.* It is in connexion with this important view that we are able

distinctly to conceive how the Will may act in connexion with motives, and yet have a true and substantive power in itself; how it may be subject to law, and yet be free. In other words, although motives are placed round about it, and enclose it on every side, still, as they differ from each other in kind as well as degree, there is evidently an opportunity for the Will, in the exercise of that power which it has in its own nature, of choosing, (or, if other expressions be preferable,) of deciding, determining, or arbitrating among them. Although, repeating the idea in another form of expression, its operations are confined within a sphere of action which is clearly and permanently marked out by its Maker, yet, within that sphere, (the general proposition of the Will's subjection to law still holding good even there,) its acts may be regarded as emanating in itself, and as possessing the attribute of freedom. Although, in some important sense, the Will is the creature of God, and is dependent upon God, and all its acts may perhaps be regarded as God's acts, yet, at the same time, taking the facts just as they are presented and stand in the light of any mere human analysis, it has also a vitality of its own, a theatre of movement appropriate to itself, and all its acts are its own acts. This is the position, undoubtedly, in which God has seen fit to place the subject before the human mind, as if He would instruct us at the same moment, both in our weakness and strength, our power and dependence.

But when we have stated this, we have stated all, we have arrived at an unfathomable mystery; one which the limited mind of man will probably never penetrate. How law and freedom can exist together within that sphere, into which human vision cannot penetrate, as we have neither the disposition nor the ability to travel be-

yond the record of the knowable, we are unable to say. We speak now in reference to our knowledge, and not in reference to the possibility of the fact. Human philosophy, which sometimes is never more philosophical than when it confesses its ignorance, stands rebuked and humbled here. We see the evidences of Law, and we know, beyond all doubt and question, that laws of the Will, particularly the law of Motives, exist; but, at the same time, if the distinction of motives into NATURAL and MORAL, or, more specifically, into DESIRIVE and OBLIGATIVE, be correct, we are not able to bind the ligatures of law so closely around the domains of the will, as to shut out the possibility either of its power or its freedom. That is to say, while the human mind can establish and prove to demonstration the proposition that the will is subject to law in every mode of its action, it is unable, by any exercise of fair reasoning, so to apply the principle of law to the Will, either in its general or more specific forms, as not to leave an ample sphere both for its liberty and its power. How God operates within that sphere, and how the human will operates, or how they operate together, we repeat that we know not. But, so far as we are permitted to know, we perceive that everything is characterized by great wisdom and goodness; and that there is no opportunity for reasonable doubt or cavilling. We are permitted, for wise purposes, to see that God is our sovereign and our master; to see that not only the hairs of our head are numbered, but that even our inmost purposes are under his control; and to see it clearly, distinctly, and undeniably; but in such a way as to leave it both possible and demonstrable, as the subject is presented in the light of human reason, that we possess in ourselves the elements (and to an extent involving the most sol-

emn responsibility) of power, of freedom, and of moral accountableness.

§ 155. *Objected that the will is necessarily governed by the strongest motive.*

But it will perhaps be said by way of objection, that the Will is necessarily governed by the strongest motive, or at least, that it necessarily acts in view of the strongest motive, of whatever kind it may be. In this way, it is supposed, we can penetrate within the sphere or circle of liberty, and distinctly see how law will degenerate into slavery. We are aware that this has often been alleged, and not unfrequently by men whose suggestions are entitled to the most respectful consideration. But the proposition, in order to have any weight as an argument, must be shown to be of universal application. If there were only one kind or class of motives, there would undoubtedly be some plausibility in the view proposed. Perhaps it would be a conclusive one.

Motives of the same kind can be directly compared together; and as our consciousness assures us of a difference in the strength of such motives, even in themselves considered, there is a propriety in speaking of them as more or less strong. But, as we have already had occasion to remark in speaking on this very subject, motives, which differ in kind, can be compared not in *themselves*, but only in their *effects*. In respect to all such, therefore, the proposition that the Will is governed by the strongest motive is an identical one. That is to say, the proposition can mean nothing more than simply, that the Will is governed by the motive by which it is governed. If we were to admit this, we should admit

only an obvious truism, which could have no weight, either one way or the other, in resolving the matter under consideration.—(See the remarks on this subject in chapter viii., part ii.)

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## CHAPTER IV.

### FREEDOM OF THE WILL IMPLIED IN MAN'S MORAL NATURE.

#### § 156. *Remarks on the nature or mode of the argument.*

THERE are various other considerations connected with the general subject of the Freedom of the Will, all of which have weight, although they may not be closely connected with each other. Hence the argument on the subject of the freedom of the will, as well as on that of its subjection to laws, has a sort of miscellaneous appearance, which may be less pleasing than it would otherwise be to those who have been accustomed to the invariable consecution of parts and the strictness of mathematical demonstration. But it will be perceived, that the nature of the subject renders this in some degree unavoidable; and it is to be hoped, that suitable allowance will be made for it. If the question before us were, whether the Romans occupied the island of Great Britain at some period previous to the Saxon conquest, we probably should not rest the conclusion on one circumstance or fact alone; but employ all which might have a bearing on the inquiry, however diverse they might be from each other in themselves. We should refer to the testimony of the

Roman historians, to the remains of encampments and roads indicating a Roman origin, to the coins and urns which have been discovered ; and although each of these circumstances would be different from and independent of the others, they would all obviously bear upon the same conclusion ; and even if they were separately weak and somewhat unsatisfactory, might yet, in their combination, furnish an argument of irresistible strength. It is so with the subject now before us, as also and particularly so with that which occupied our attention in the Second Part of this work.—We shall, therefore, go on to mention one view of the subject after another, in the expectation that each distinct part of the argument will be kept in mind ; and that the influence of each will be so united with that of others as to render the conclusion not only satisfactory, but unanswerable.

### § 157. *Of the elements of man's moral nature.*

Although the argument, taken as a whole, is emphatically a miscellaneous one, yet the remarks of this chapter will be found to be connected together, in this respect at least, that they all have a relation to one topic, viz., man's moral nature. That man has a moral nature we cannot, for a moment, suppose to be a matter of doubt. Without such a nature he could not be the subject of a moral government ; and although he might possess all knowledge, he would necessarily be without virtue and vice ; and neither praise nor blame, neither rewards nor punishment, could ever attach to his conduct.

There is nothing inconceivable or inconsistent in the supposition of a being so constituted as to be possessed of intellect, propensities, passions, and will, and yet to be

incapable, by his very constitution, of framing those notions and of exercising those feelings which are implied in a moral nature. But such is not the constitution of man. While he is endowed with intellect, and appetites, and propensities, and passions, and will, God has seen fit to elevate and ennable him, by constituting him a moral and religious being. The elements of his moral nature (in accordance with that striking wisdom ever manifested in God's works, which accomplishes great results by simple means) are few in number, and are to be found chiefly in his ability to frame the abstract notions of right and wrong, in the feelings of moral approval and disapproval, in those states of the mind which are known as feelings of remorse, and in feelings of moral obligation.—All these states of mind, which, taken together, constitute man a moral being, and without which he could not sustain or possess that character, are based upon and imply the fact, as will more fully appear in the separate examination of them, of the freedom of the will.

§ 158. *Evidence of freedom of the will from feelings of approval and disapproval.*

In stating the argument which may be deduced on this subject from our moral nature, we proceed to remark, in the first place, that the freedom of the will is implied in, and is shown by, the moral feelings of approval and disapproval. We are so constituted, that, whenever we behold a person performing a virtuous action, demeaning himself with entire kindness, good faith, and justice, we at once feel a sentiment of approval. On the other hand, if we see a person pursuing a different course, one which is obviously characterized by falsehood, ingratitude, and

injustice, we at once feel an emotion of disapproval. But if it should be suddenly disclosed to us that the agent, whom we thus, according to the circumstances of the case, either approve or condemn, was not in the possession of freedom of will, it is undeniable, that all such approval or disapproval would at once cease. We should no more think of approving an action, however beneficial it might be, which was known to be performed without freedom of will, than of pronouncing a man worthy of moral approbation for a purely natural gift, such as symmetry of form, a musical voice, or striking outlines of the countenance. More properly, we should think nothing about it. To approve under such circumstances would, by the very constitution of our nature, be an impossibility. The existence of liberty, therefore, is, in this respect, and so far as these feelings are concerned, fundamental to our moral nature.

§ 159. *Proof of freedom from feelings of remorse.*

There is another class of mental states, constituting a part of man's moral nature, to which similar remarks will apply ; we refer to feelings of remorse. These feelings are entirely distinct from those of approval and disapproval. We are capable of approving or disapproving when our attention is directed solely to the conduct of others ; but we never feel *remorse* for what others do, and it is impossible that we should. Feelings of remorse have relation to ourselves alone. We experience them when our own conduct, and not that of others, is the subject of moral disapproval. They are painful feelings, but the suffering is of a peculiar kind, altogether different from mere sadness or grief ; and hence they may be regarded

as having a character of their own, and as separate in their nature from all other states of the mind. The existence of these states of mind implies, on the part of the person who is the subject of them, a conviction of the freedom of the will.

It can hardly be thought necessary to adduce facts and arguments in support of what has been said. If a person feels an internal condemnation or remorse for what he has done, it certainly must be on the ground that he was at liberty to will and to do otherwise. It cannot be doubted that this position is fully and universally admitted.—There may be fears and sorrows, undoubtedly; there may be regrets and sufferings, in cases which are not dependent on any determinations of our own; but there cannot possibly be REMORSE, which implies a sense of guilt as well as the experience of sorrow, without a conviction, deep as the basis of the mind itself, that, in doing the criminal action, we willed and acted freely, and not by compulsion. If, therefore, feelings of remorse exist, as they not unfrequently do, they furnish a strong proof in support of the liberty of the will.

§ 160. *Without the possession of liberty of will man could never have framed the abstract notions of right and wrong.*

Among other things having a relation to man's situation and character as a moral being, it is to be noticed that he is so constituted as to be able to form the abstract notions of right and wrong, or of virtue and vice, which are only other and synonymous expressions for right and wrong. These conceptions (which are thoughts, and not emotions; the creations of the Intellect, and not the exer-

cises of the Sensibilities or heart) are truly great and ennobling ; and it may perhaps be said of them, more than of any other part of our moral nature, that they are the basis of moral reasoning, and the foundation of moral anticipation and hope. They disclose to the mind, like light coming from heaven and shining vividly into its depths, the great fact that there is a real, permanent, and immutable distinction between good and evil. Strike out and annihilate these primary conceptions, and you at the same moment obscure and destroy the glory of man's mental nature, and blot out, at least as far as all human perception is concerned, the brightest feature in the character of all other mental existences.

But these leading ideas, so fundamental to everything of a moral and religious nature, could never have been formed without a conviction of the liberty of the will. The occasions undoubtedly, on which they are suggested and exist in the mind, are instances of voluntary conduct, either our own or that of others, where we either approve or disapprove. Without such occasions offered to our notice, and without such attendant emotions of moral approval or disapproval, it may be asserted without any hesitation, that men would never have formed any conceptions in the abstract of right and wrong, of rectitude and the opposite ; and, consequently, could never have beheld, as they now clearly do, as if inscribed by the radiant finger of God, a great line of demarcation, remaining always and immutably the same, between good and evil, between holiness and sin. But, as has already been stated, it is always implied in the feelings of approval and disapproval, that the person, whose conduct is either approved or disapproved, possessed liberty of the will. Without a firm conviction that such was the case, the emotions could

never have existed ; and, consequently, there could never have occurred, in the history of the human mind, that state of things which is the basis of the origin of the abstract notions of right and wrong, of rectitude and want of rectitude, of virtue and vice, which are only different expressions for the same thing. We have, therefore, in this view of the subject, a new proof that the liberty of the will is positively and necessarily involved in the fact of our possessing a moral nature.

§ 161. *Proof from feelings of moral obligation.*

There is a distinct class of mental states, entitled, in every point of view, to an important place in man's moral constitution, which may be termed Obligatory feelings, or feelings of moral obligation. Of these states of mind we do not profess to give a definition. As they are elementary and simple, they are necessarily undefinable. But we cannot doubt that every one must have more or less frequently experienced them, and that every one knows what their nature is. And this class of feelings also furnishes an argument on the subject before us.—We deem the assertion within the bounds of truth and of the common opinion of mankind, when we say that no man ever does or ever can experience in himself the feeling of moral obligation to do a thing, so long as he feels himself to be actually destitute of liberty to do it. And this is equally true, whether the destitution of liberty relates to the outward and bodily action or to the action of the will. Does a man feel himself morally accountable for the performance of an action to which he is driven by some bodily compulsion ? Or does he feel himself accountable for a failure to perform an action

from the performance of which he is kept by actual bodily restraint ? And if the mind is constrained and driven by a compression and violence, corresponding, as far as the different nature of the two things will permit, to such compulsion of the body, can there be any more conviction of accountability, or of any form of moral obligation in the one case than in the other ? But if the existence of feelings of obligation be undeniable, and if the existence of such feelings be incompatible with the absence of freedom, and if both these truths are based on the consciousness and confirmed by the universal acknowledgments of mankind, then it follows, of course, that men do in fact feel and recognise, and that they fully and assuredly know their freedom.

§ 162. *Evidence from men's views of crimes and punishments.*

Again, the freedom of the will is clearly implied in the views which we find to be generally adopted by men in respect to crimes and punishments. This view of our subject is closely connected with that which has just been given ; and essentially the same illustrations as were introduced in the last section will apply here.

If a man is laid under bodily constraint, and, in that situation, is the agent or rather instrument in the performance of an action involving great loss and suffering to others, such action is never considered a crime and deserving of punishment, in whatever light it might be regarded under other circumstances. This is undeniable. And we always take the same view when the mind is actually laid under constraint as when the body is ; with this difference merely, that constraint of the body is a

matter easily ascertainable, while that of the mind can be learned only with a greater or less degree of probability. The power of the will is a gift or trust, as much so as the power of perception, and is a definite thing; in some persons it is greater, in others less; but in all cases it has its limits. Whenever, therefore, there is an utter disproportion between the strength of the motive and the power of the will, (so much so, perhaps, as to render it essentially the same as if the will were wholly destitute of power,) the will is universally understood to be, at such times, under a greater or less degree of constraint. And if, under such circumstances, a crime be charged upon a person, we graduate the degree of it, (looking upon it as higher in some cases and lower in others,) in precise conformity with the degree of constraint, so far as we can judge what it is.

"There are cases," says Dr. Reid, "in which a man's voluntary actions are thought to be very little, if at all, in his power, on account of the violence of the motive that impels him. The magnanimity of a hero or a martyr is not expected in every man and on all occasions.—If a man, trusted by the government with a secret which it is high treason to disclose, be prevailed upon by a bribe, we have no mercy for him, and hardly allow the greatest bribe to be any alleviation of his crime. But, on the other hand, if the secret be extorted by the rack or the dread of present death, we pity him more than we blame him, and would think it severe and inequitable to condemn him as a traitor."—And he afterward gives the reason of these different judgments, viz., that while the mere love of money leaves to a man the entire power over himself, the torment of the rack or the dread of present death are so violent motives, that men who have

not uncommon strength of mind are not masters of themselves in such a situation, and, therefore, what they do is not imputed to them as a crime at all, or is thought less criminal than it would otherwise be.

§ 163. *Prevalent opinions of mankind on this subject.*

The argument under this general head, so far as it has now been gone into, has been stated in particulars ; and it is probably more satisfactory, when stated in this way, than in any other. But something may be said on the subject of the freedom of the will, as connected with our moral nature, when it is considered, as it were, in the *mass*. The body of mankind undoubtedly look upon this subject, in its great outlines and as a whole, without attempting to penetrate and seize its elements. And, without unduly yielding to popular prejudices or abating from the dignity of philosophy, we may safely assert, that this is an inquiry on which an appeal may with propriety be made to the common experience, and the common convictions and expressions of the great body of men. And we no sooner make the appeal than we find that the testimony from that source is unanimous and unequivocal.

There are some truths which are so deeply based in the human constitution, that all men of all classes receive them and act upon them. They are planted deeply and immutably in the soul, and no reasoning, however plausible, can shake them. And, if we are not mistaken, the doctrine of the freedom of the will, as a condition of even the possibility of a moral nature, is one of these first truths. It seems to be regarded by all persons, without any exception, as a dictate of common sense and as a first principle of our nature, that men are morally accountable

and are the subjects of a moral responsibility in any respect whatever, only so far as they possess freedom, both of the outward action and of the will. They hold to this position as an elementary truth, and would no sooner think of letting it go, than of abandoning the conviction of their personal existence and identity. They do not profess to go into particulars, but they assert it in the mass, that man is a moral being only so far as he is free. And such a unanimous and decided testimony, bearing, as it obviously does, the seal and superscription of nature herself, is entitled to serious consideration.

In view of the various suggestions of this chapter, (and further illustrations to the same effect might be given if time would allow,) we are abundantly authorized in the assertion, that the liberty of the will is implied, and fully and clearly implied, in the fact of man's possessing a moral nature ; and that, if he possesses such a nature, he possesses freedom.

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## CHAPTER V.

### OTHER PROOFS OF FREEDOM OF THE WILL.

#### § 164. *Evidence of the freedom of the will from languages.*

In bringing forward the various considerations which, however disconnected with each other in themselves, have yet a bearing on the subject before us, we proceed to remark further, that the existence of the freedom of the will may be argued with some degree of force from the structure of all languages.—We have already had

occasion to make the remark, that every language is, in some important sense of the terms, a mirror of the mind ; and that something may be learned of the tendencies of the mind, not only from the form or structure of languages in general, but even from the import of particular terms.—Now it is undeniable, that the terms LIBERTY and FREEDOM, and other terms of equivalent import, are found in all languages ; and that they are not only found in application to nations, but to individuals ; and not only in application to outward actions, but to the acts of the Will. But if men are in fact and by their very constitution destitute of liberty of the will, it seems impossible to give any explanation of this state of things. So that it is a natural and irresistible inference, if we can infer the convictions and belief of men at all from the forms of speech, that they universally have a conviction and belief of their liberty in that respect. And we can give no explanation of the existence of such conviction or belief, except on the ground of the actual existence of that freedom to which the belief relates.

§ 165. *Evidence from the occasional suspension of the will's acts.*

Another circumstance which may be adduced as an indication and evidence of the FREEDOM of the Will, is the fact of the occasional suspension or delay of its operations, when its action is solicited by the pressure of motives which happen to be various and conflicting in their kind, though all of them are alike powerful and urgent. Without attempting to explain how this suspension takes place, it is enough for our present purpose simply to state the fact, as it constantly presents itself to observation and

notice, viz., that at times, when motives are thronging around the will in various directions, and are each and all of them clamorous for an action of the will favourable to themselves, the will nevertheless does not act. It is true, some persons will say, and probably with correctness, that this negation or suspension of action is itself to be regarded as a species of resolve or voluntary determination; that while the will reserves itself, so to speak, for a movement based upon more mature inquiry, this very reservation of its action is itself an action. Without stopping to comment on this suggestion, it will be perceived, that the essential idea still holds good and indisputable, viz., that the will not unfrequently, for some reason or other, whatever it may be, withholds its decision in respect to claims that are urged by motives of no small efficacy. And this suspension of the will's action in respect to such claims, on whatever grounds it may happen, and whatever other course may be taken by the will, is undoubtedly to be regarded, in a candid view of the subject, as a characteristic and a proof of its freedom.

*§ 166. Evidence of the freedom of the will from the control which every man has over his own motives of action.*

There are various other considerations, which are entitled to more or less weight.—We have already seen, in the Second Part of this Work, that the will is subject to laws; and have further seen that it never acts, and is not capable of acting, except in connexion with antecedent motives. But it is a striking fact, and one worthy of special notice in connexion with the will's freedom,

that we ourselves have no inconsiderable degree of control over these motives. If the reader has in memory the remarks made in the First Part of this Work on the connexion among all the great departments of the mind, particularly on the relation of the Intellect to the will and of the Sensibilities to the will, he will be prepared to understand and receive the truth of this remark. Those motives which come in immediate contact with the will, and are most closely connected with its action, are deposited, not in the Understanding, but in the Sensibilities; are not mere perceptions of the intellect, but are impregnated with an infusion of desire and sentiment. Still they undoubtedly have a close connexion with the antecedent acts of the intellect. There must be something previously perceived before there can be either desire or emotion. It is impossible, in the nature of things, that we should have the feeling of desire or the feeling of obligation, without an antecedent act of the intellect or understanding making known and identifying to us the particular object of desire, and the particular object to which the feeling of moral obligation relates. Hence, as the sensibilities act upon the will, and the understanding acts upon the sensibilities, we may in some degree control the will by enlightening the understanding. But it is the will which, more than anything else, is the counterpart, or the synonym perhaps, of the personal pronoun, of the I and We, which are so conspicuously introduced as agents; and it is the will, therefore, which, by adopting this process, controls itself. The voluntary power, operating through the intellect, may contract or expand the horizon of motives by which it is surrounded, and in this way regulate by anticipation the possibilities and probabilities, if not the absolute certainty of its own

ulterior action. We are presented, therefore, in this view of the subject, with an instance of self-regulation, obviously carried on under the control and within the limits of law, which is not only liberty in essence, but liberty in its most interesting and perfect form.

*§ 167. The freedom of the will further shown from the attempts of men to influence the conduct of their fellow-men.*

The freedom of the will seems to be evinced and proved, furthermore, from the manner in which we address our fellow-men when we wish them to pursue a certain course of conduct. When we request or require them to do a certain thing, we certainly act on the supposition that they have both the power and the liberty to do it. It would evidently be a very fruitless thing to attempt, by means of persuasion and argument, to move them in a certain direction, if they were the subjects of an inflexible destiny, and destitute of the power and liberty of acting in accordance with what is proposed. The view which men obviously take of their fellow-men is, that they are rational beings ; that the considerations addressed to them will have their due weight ; and that their acting or not acting in conformity with those considerations is a matter wholly within their own power, and in respect to which they are entirely and completely free

*§ 168. Further evidence from the observation of men's conduct.*

Among other sources of evidence in support of the proposition of the Will's freedom, we may confidently

appeal to the observation of what is constantly taking place among men, as we behold them engaged in the pursuits and duties of life. Even a slight notice of their conduct fully justifies the assertion, that men act universally as if they felt and knew themselves to be free. In making this statement, however, we may properly claim to be understood in the natural import of the terms. We speak of men in general, as we see them in the discharge of the common duties of life and under the influence of ordinary motives ; and not of those whose liberty of outward action is restrained by chains and dungeons ; nor of those whose inward liberty has been perplexed and compromised by inordinate indulgences, which inevitably tend to bring the mind more or less within the verge of insanity. Within the limitation implied in this remark, a very slight observation discovers to us that men are constantly in action ; that the causes of action exist in themselves ; and that, in all the numberless varieties of their conduct, they act freely. One is in pursuit of honour, another of pleasure, another of wealth ; one acts from motives of interest, and another from sentiments of duty ; one has solely in view the promotion of his own personal welfare, another that of mankind ; but in each and all of these cases, and in all others, there is no declaration and no evidence of compulsion. And we feel the force of this statement the more, when we further notice, that men are frequently changing those pursuits to which their attention was directed in the first instance ; transferring themselves from one neighbourhood to another, from one sphere of life to another, and from one climate to another ; and adapting their feelings and conduct to situations never before experienced. Everywhere there is life, activity, movement, energy ; plans never be-

fore started ; new methods of executing them ; the motives and conduct of one individual conflicting with those of another, and varying constantly to meet conflicting exigencies. And does all this bear the impress of fatality ? Are we not to receive these facts as decisive indications of liberty, even if it be true that we are unable to define what liberty is ? Can we even *conceive* of a freedom which shall result in opening a wider sphere, or in securing a greater variety of action ?

§ 169. *Argued further from the view taken in the Scriptures.*

We conclude this enumeration of circumstances, which tend to illustrate and prove the existence of liberty of the will, with the single fact further, which no one can regard otherwise than as entitled to our serious consideration, that the Scriptures clearly recognise man as possessing such liberty. If the Scriptures everywhere assert the omniscience and superintendence of God, and announce his superintendence as extending to the minutest things and events, both material and immaterial, as seems to be abundantly evident and to be universally admitted ; still it must be confessed, at the same time, that they are no less explicit in the announcement, both expressly and by implication, that man has power, freedom, and accountability. All those passages which call upon men to consider of their ways, obviously imply that there is no obstruction in the way of their considering ; and that they are free either to do or not to do it. All those passages which exhort and require men to repent of their deeds, obviously imply that they are in the possession of liberty, and that there is no obstacle in the way of their repent-

ance which is inconsistent with liberty. All those passages which enjoin upon men the performance of moral and religious duties, go upon the supposition that obedience and disobedience are alike within the sphere of their choice. "Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways ; for why will ye die, oh house of Israel," is the beautiful and affecting language which God utters to his ancient covenant people and to all his impenitent children of all nations.

Theologians, perhaps, referring to the disastrous effects resulting from the fall of our first parents, will assure us that the freedom which men have in the discharge of the higher and more essential duties of the religious life, is the especial gift of the great Being who requires the performance of such duties. But, in connexion with the theological view, it will be remembered that the question here is, not whence men derive their freedom, but whether they have it.

#### *§ 170. Practical importance of the doctrine of liberty*

If we have not stated the argument on the side of freedom so clearly and forcibly, and so much at length, as might have been done, the deficiency occasions the less solicitude, when we consider that, in all ages of the world, the doctrine in question, with few exceptions, has been fully and universally admitted. Still there have been found some persons, from time to time, who have maintained and have believed the opposite, and have strenuously endeavoured to give a currency to their opinions. And hence, in closing these remarks on the subject of the freedom of the will, it seems a suitable opportunity to say something on its practical importance. If we are

destitute of freedom, we certainly cannot feel moral accountability ; and whatever course we may take in life, even if it be entirely injurious and sinful, we shall yet feel that we are not properly the subjects of blame. Before, therefore, we adopt the notion of man's destitution of liberty, (if, indeed, it be possible, after a due consideration of what has been said on the subject,) we should carefully and seriously consider the consequences.

For the purpose of showing that these intimations are not based upon unfounded or exaggerated fears, and in order more clearly to illustrate the pernicious consequences to which erroneous notions on this subject are apt to lead, we take the liberty to introduce here an extract from the writings of the celebrated M. Diderot.—“Examine it narrowly,” says M. Diderot, “and you will see that the word *liberty* is a word devoid of meaning ; that there are not, and that there cannot be, free beings ; that we are only what accords with the general order, with our organization, our education, and the chain of events. These dispose of us invincibly. We can no more conceive of a being acting without a motive, than we can of one of the arms of a balance acting without a weight. The motive is always exterior and foreign, fastened upon us by some cause distinct from ourselves. What deceives us is the prodigious variety of our actions, joined to the habit, which we catch at our birth, of confounding the voluntary and the free. We have been so often praised and blamed, and have so often praised and blamed others, that we contract an inveterate prejudice of believing that we and they *will* and act freely. But if there is no liberty, there is no action that merits either praise or blame ; neither vice nor virtue ; nothing that ought either to be rewarded or punished. What, then, is the dis-

tinction among men ? The doing of good and the doing of ill ? The doer of ill is one who must be destroyed or punished. The doer of good is lucky, not virtuous. But, though neither the doer of good or of ill be free, man is nevertheless a being to be modified ; it is for this reason the doer of ill should be destroyed upon the scaffold. From thence the good effects of education, of pleasure, of grief, of grandeur, of poverty, &c. ; from thence a philosophy full of pity, strongly attached to the good, nor more angry with the wicked than the whirlwind which fills one's eyes with dust."

It seems to be unnecessary to spend time in commenting on this passage, which does as little credit to the heart as the head of its author, and which is as much at variance with sound philosophy as it is with good morals and the existence of society. Wherever such pernicious principles have gained a footing, it is not surprising that the intellect should be obscured ; that the sensibilities should be blunted ; that crimes, dreadfully revolting to human nature, should be multiplied ; and that even whole kingdoms should be convulsed, and clothed in mourning and blood.

Let us, then, take that true position, which is clearly pointed out both by reason and the Scriptures, of humble dependence on God on the one hand, and of solemn responsibility for our conduct on the other. It is impossible for us to form too high notions of the power, wisdom, and superintendence of the Deity ; nothing is more favourable to virtue than the conviction of his constant presence and oversight ; but, at the same time, we ought ever to remember that he has seen fit to impart to us a moral nature, embracing the elements both of power and liberty ; and, whether we account this gift as ten talents,

or five, or only one, he holds us responsible for its use, and will punish the slothful servant who hides it in the earth. “*For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.*”

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## CHAPTER VI.

### CONSISTENCY OF LAW AND FREEDOM.

§ 171. *Objected that the views maintained are contradictory.*

We are now so far advanced in our inquiries as to find ourselves in a position where we are met by the objection, expressed with some variety of phraseology, but in all cases to this effect, that there is an utter inconsistency and contradiction between the two doctrines of the freedom of the will and the subjection of the will to laws. If the Will is free, it is said, it cannot be subject to laws; and if it is subject to laws, it cannot be free; and, at any rate, there is something utterly incomprehensible in this state of things.—The consideration of this objection will occupy our attention in this chapter; and, at the same time, will incidentally furnish an opportunity for some remarks, which may not be unimportant in their practical applications.

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*§ 172. Answered that they result necessarily from the evidence.*

In remarking upon the objection which has just been stated, and which undoubtedly exists in the minds of some candid inquirers, we wish it to be noticed, in the first place, that each of these two propositions, viz., that the will is subject to laws, and that the will is free, rests upon its appropriate evidence. We take it for granted that they are propositions which have a meaning and which can be understood ; and that, as such, they admit of the application of reasoning, and are susceptible either of affirmation or denial. In reasoning upon them, they have been made separate subjects of contemplation. The arguments by which they are respectively supported are entirely distinct ; and are, at the same time, so appropriate to the nature of the subject to be proved, and, considered as a whole, bear upon it with so much force, that it is difficult to conceive how a well-balanced mind, which is open to the reception of truth, can resist the conclusions to which they lead.—And in making this assertion, we do not wish to be understood as offering a remark which is to be taken with some modification and diminution of its obvious import. The remark is based upon the constitution of the mind itself ; particularly so far as the nature and laws of belief are concerned in, and make a part of, that constitution. Every one knows that our belief is not a matter which is under our control in such a sense ; that we can believe or not believe, as we happen to choose. The mind is so constituted that we exercise belief, not in accordance with a mere and direct act of volition, but in accordance with the nature and amount

of the evidence which happens to be before the mind at the precise moment of belief.

And, with this view of things in memory, we feel fully authorized in saying, that the evidence which has been brought forward in support of the proposition of the will's subjection to laws is such as, in ordinary cases, to remove all doubt. We look upon the proposition as *proved*; not merely as probable, but as *certain*. It is not a matter, the reception and credence of which is left to our own choice; but, on the contrary, such is the constitution of the human mind, we cannot possibly do otherwise than believe.—And these statements will apply equally well to both propositions. The proposition of the will's freedom is attended with such an amount of evidence, appropriate to the point to be established, as to be equally beyond doubt, equally certain. We receive both with a full and unwavering conviction; and such are the nature and fundamental principles of belief, that we are unable to withhold such conviction.

If, then, our belief involves what appears to us at present an inconsistency or even a contradiction, (we do not say what we *know* to be a contradiction, but what *appears* to be such,) it is a matter which we cannot help, and in respect to which, although we might wish it to be otherwise, we should give ourselves no unnecessary trouble. We are in the same situation (certainly not a less favourable one) as the sincere inquirer in other things. Does the natural philosopher, in pursuing the investigation of facts, stop to inquire what doctrines formerly received it will either favour or conflict with, what system it will build up or put down, what new and inexplicable mysteries it will involve? Is he not obliged to adhere to the testimony that is fairly presented to

him, wherever it may go; even if it should lead into a world not of pure light, but of mingled darkness and light? And in like manner, in respect to the question before us, let us go firmly and frankly wherever the evidence conducts; even if it should be found to lead us, as no doubt it will, to a great mystery, where the human mind stops and starts back, appalled on the one hand by its own feebleness, and on the other overwhelmed by the greatness of the divine wisdom.

§ 173. *Denial of the alleged contradiction.*

In answer, therefore, to the objection which has been referred to, we say in the first place, that we are bound by the evidence, whatever difficulties may attend the relative adjustment of the results. If the objection were to some extent a valid and admissible one, (that is to say, if there were truly an *appearance*, a degree of probability, of inconsistency and contradiction,) this answer would be sufficient.

But it is proper to say further, that there is no satisfactory evidence, either in a higher or lower degree, of the inconsistency and contradiction which has been alleged to exist. It has undoubtedly sometimes happened, either by design or from mere carelessness, that men have so framed their speech, have so selected and constructed their formulary of words, as to make a contradiction, when there is none in the nature of things, and none in fact. If we define freedom to be an exemption from law, then no doubt the proposition of the will's subjection to law implies the exclusion of liberty. But, although bodily freedom can be defined, mental freedom, as we have already had occasion to remark, is not suscep-

tible of definition; it is something, indeed, which is a matter of experience, and is known by consciousness, but, like the simple and elementary emotions and desires, and any other subjects of mental realization which are truly elementary, it cannot be described by words. And if it were otherwise, the definition of liberty above mentioned would be wholly inadmissible; for exemption from law is so far from constituting liberty, that it might be shown, upon grounds entirely satisfactory, that there can be no liberty, not even a possibility of it, where law has no place. So that we feel fully authorized in saying, although we are under the necessity of leaving the inquiry with these few words, that there is no evidence of contradiction in the case.

§ 174. *Admission of inexplicableness or mystery.*

But if it be merely said that there is something inexplicable or incomprehensible, something mysterious in the relation of the two propositions which have been considered, it is not easy to deny that there is truth in the remark. We cannot imagine that there is any undue humiliation, anything discreditable in the acknowledgment that such is the fact. Nothing is more certain than that there are many things, into the full measure of whose length and breadth, and height and depth, the human mind, in the present state of existence and under the present economy of things, has never been able to penetrate. And it is undoubtedly the mark of true wisdom, frankly to acknowledge our ignorance in those cases where it must infallibly exist, and not to indulge either in pretensions which are unfounded, or in complaints which are useless. Such advice, indeed, may not be entirely accept-

able to men of a captious temper, or of an intellect imperfectly disciplined ; but it is fully warranted by correct views of our own powers, and of the relations we sustain to other beings. "The most enlightened of men," says Robert Hall, "have always been the first to perceive and acknowledge the remaining obscurity which hung around them ; just as, in the night, the further a light extends, the wider the surrounding sphere of darkness appears. Hence it has always been observed, that the most profound inquirers into nature have been the most modest and humble." These remarks of a writer so distinguished, not only for refinement of taste and fervour of piety, but for philosophical acuteness, naturally reminds us of some sayings of Mr. Locke, which indicate at the same time his characteristic modesty and candour, and his views of the very difficulty which we are now examining. "I own freely to you the weakness of my understanding, that, though it be unquestionable that there is omnipotence and omniscience in God our Maker, and though I cannot have a clearer perception of anything than that I am free, yet I cannot make [meaning undoubtedly that he could not explain and clear up in all respects how it should be so] freedom in man consistent with omnipotence and omniscience in God, *though I am as fully persuaded of both as of any truth I most firmly assent to* ; and therefore I have long since given off the consideration of that question, resolving all into this short conclusion, that if it be possible for God to make a free agent, then man is free, though I see not the way of it "

*§ 175. Of the limited powers of the human mind.*

In this connexion, and as tending to support the views of this chapter, we think it proper to make a few general suggestions in respect to the limited powers of the human mind. We may regard it as a well-established principle, that the mind of man, although it may be indefinitely progressive in some directions, is subject to the restriction of impassable barriers in others. How many objects of knowledge, in the sphere of material as well as mental nature, have altogether set at nought the inquiries of men ! Beyond the boundaries, whatever they may be, which God has assigned as the barriers of our faculties, is the land of darkness, the region of hieroglyphics, the habitation of mysteries. We use these expressions not in lightness of spirit, but merely to convey the fact as it exists, and with profound veneration ; for if those dark and mysterious places are not occupied by the human mind, it is certain that they are occupied and filled by another mind infinitely greater. The existence of mysteries, beyond its allotted sphere of action and inquiry, is necessarily an incident to every created mind ; for the mere fact of being created necessarily implies inferiority ; and that, too, in perception as well as in power. In one sense, indeed, it may be admitted, that man is great, and the honoured possessor of great and wonderful faculties. Certainly this is the case when we compare him with the lower animals, that have no moral nature, and seem destined soon to perish. But let him never forget, that, under other circumstances, the view presented is entirely the reverse, and that he is as blind in intellect as he is poor in power, in comparison with God. He who suita-

bly realizes the relation which he sustains to the all-wise Jehovah, will not presume to compare his feeble intellect with the infinite Godhead ; his understanding of yesterday, just kindling into light and life, with the everlasting Sun of knowledge, ever effulgent and inexhaustible. Let this modesty of true wisdom, so suitable on every subject, have its due place in the matter under examination. If we cannot see how the subjection of the will to law is consistent with its freedom, while irresistible evidence compels us to believe both the liberty and the law, let us arraign our incapacity rather than the proof before us.

§ 176. *We find things which cannot be explained everywhere.*

If there were no other mysteries in the universe but the one in question, it might be thought less reasonable to submit quietly to our inability to explain it. But they are found all around us ; they exist everywhere ; and everywhere baffle our curiosity. We generally suppose it to be otherwise, because it may happen that we are unable to point them out ; but our inability to do this is owing to the fact of our not having given attention to the subject. We do indeed sometimes direct our attention to the mysteries which are placed at a distance from us ; but it is seldom that we look at those which are near at hand. In the time of the Apostle Paul, the opposers of Christianity objected particularly to the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead, on account of its being so mysterious, inexplicable, and wonderful ; but they did not consider, till the Apostle reminded them of the fact, that the conversion of the seed sown in the ground into

the stalk or plant is no less wonderful, no less mysterious. Perhaps we might be justified in going so far as to say, there is nothing, however familiar it may be, which is not in some of its aspects replete with mystery.

Can we explain how the soul and body exist and act together? Can we understand how God, who is a spirit, can fill all places with his presence? Can we comprehend how, under any circumstances, mind, which is so entirely distinct, can operate upon matter and put it in motion, as is the fact in our ordinary acts of volition? Can we explain the operations of matter itself, even the growth of a blade of grass? Do not the most familiar appearances of nature, though easily explainable in some things, present in others insuperable difficulties? And why then should we account it particularly unlooked for and strange, that, in the two distinct doctrines of the will's freedom and the will's subjection to law, we should find something which withstands our penetration and baffles our sagacity?

§ 177. *Illustrated from the influence of one man over another.*

We would furthermore propose to such as are disposed to insist upon the difficulty under consideration, that the same difficulty, or, at least, one closely analogous, is constantly occurring in common life. We refer to the fact, which is too obvious to admit of any denial, that one man is capable of controlling, and does in fact control, the will of another. By his wealth, or personal address; or persuasive language, or powers of reasoning, he bends his neighbour to his own purposes. This is seen particularly in the case of the orator who addresses the public as-

sembly; and who sometimes not only sways the individuals composing it to his own purposes, but does it against the views and the determinations which they had previously formed. Now here is a case where, according to the common understanding of it, the Will of one man or of many men is under the control of another; and yet it is not the common understanding or the common feeling, that the Will of the former is not free. Here is a case in which law and liberty are, by our own admission, united together; subjection and freedom are found in a state of combination. And why should we say, that what is possible with men is impossible with God?

§ 178. *The opposite supposition attended with equal difficulty.*

But there is another consideration which is worthy of the attention of the objector.—Before we arraign the views which have been given, it seems proper to look at the results of the opposite scheme. If we exonerate the action of the will from the influence of all law, and leave it to the irregular control of what may be variously termed accident, indifference, or contingency, we do not thereby secure its freedom. Can that mind be free which knows not at one moment, nor can even conjecture, what may be its position, its acts, or its destiny at the next moment? It is very much in the position of that people who are under the direction of an irresponsible despotism, compared with which, a despotism, which is in any degree subject to law, is quite tolerable. A will without law is necessarily subjected to the highest despotism. At one moment the volition may be in one direction; the next in a direction altogether opposite, without the ability

to secure any fixed result. And it seems to be impossible in the nature of things, that man should be conscious (and its existence and nature are learned from consciousness alone) of freedom under such circumstances. It is wholly inconceivable. So that, let the question be argued as it may, it will always be found in the human mind, as in civil government, that law is the basis of liberty.

§ 179. *Both views are to be fully received.*

In respect, then, to the two distinct doctrines of the will's freedom and its subjection to law, there remains nothing to be done but the cheerful, ready, and complete reception of both. And, with the views which we entertain, the outlines of which have been imperfectly laid before the reader, we are constrained earnestly to insist upon this, as the only correct and satisfactory position. The doctrine, that the will has its laws, is very important, considered in connexion with the relation which men sustain to the Supreme Being. This view places the will in subordination to that higher and more glorious Intelligence, from whom the laws, to which it is amenable, proceed. By adopting this doctrine, we are enabled to understand, how his full and perfect superintendence can be maintained. He has himself assured us, that he is intimately acquainted with the outward actions of men; that he knoweth their down-sitting and up-rising; and it is a pleasing and consoling thought, that his care and exact scrutiny may be extended even to the mind itself. Who will not rejoice to be, in soul as well as in body, in the hands of God? Who will feel that there could be any better provision for his security than is thus

that, if we will faithfully do our duty, God will be as faithful to help us. Not an hour is spent in effort of any kind, in conformity with the directions of an enlightened conscience, and, to use the expressions which Milton's genius has made so familiar,

"As ever in our great Taskmaster's eye,"

which is not attended with a divine blessing. The doctrine of a combination of power on the part of men, with complete superintendence on the part of God, brings God and men into harmony with each other; it fully makes men co-workers with God, and yet under the twofold condition, without which God can neither be a sovereign nor man a moral agent, of responsibility and dependence.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### ENTHRALMENT OR SLAVERY OF THE WILL.

#### § 181. *Of the occasions of mental enthralment.*

It here seems to come in course to offer some explanations on what may be termed the Enthrallment or SLAVERY of the will. The explanation of this subject, however difficult it might prove when undertaken separate from and independent of other views of the Will, seems to follow easily, and, we may add, almost necessarily, from the views which have been taken of the FREEDOM of the voluntary power. It has appeared from various remarks made in preceding chapters, that a knowledge of freedom,

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*§ 182. Inability to define enthralment or slavery*

But what is meant by enthralment or slavery? What verbal definition can we give?—If the question related to the enthralment or slavery of the body, we could probably give a statement, or definition perhaps, that would fully and precisely meet the question. But we have already had occasion distinctly to intimate, that the nature of corporeal enthralment and liberty throws no light, or, at most, but a feeble and doubtful ray, upon that of the mind. We are not more able, by any mere form of words, to explain what is meant by slavery, when that term is applied to the mind, than we are to define mental freedom. In both cases we are obliged to refer each one to his own internal experience; but with a full conviction, at the same time, that this reference will fully answer the purpose, and cannot leave him in doubt.

On the supposition, therefore, that each one as fully understands what is meant by enthralment as by freedom, and that there is no mistake or doubt in either case, we repeat again, that, whenever there is a want of harmony in the mind, there is always a greater or less degree of enthralment. This want of harmony, this internal jarring and conflict, this aggression and resistance of the mental powers, will always exist, whenever any appetite, propensity, or passion, of whatever character, swells over its allotted limits, and becomes unduly and inordinately powerful. If we may be allowed to use such expressions, every part of the mind instinctively knows its appropriate place, and will not suffer itself to be thrust from it without much remonstrance and resistance. If such resistance is not successful, and if some one inward princi-

distinction (and it is a distinction which is fully recognised in law both Municipal and International) between an extorted promise and a free promise. And if an extorted promise is actually different from a free one, it must be because extortion implies a degree of enthralment. And this is the fact.

When the question of life and death is placed before a man at once, and without giving him time for reflection and for strengthening his resolves, the fear becomes so excessive, that there is no sort of proportion between the strength of the motive and that of other principles within him which might furnish the elements of resistance. Those supports, upon which the Will is wont to rely in seasons of trying assault and great emergency, are suddenly overthrown ; and it is prostrated and carried away captive almost without a conflict. The person himself, if the circumstances are of a nature so decisive as has been stated, experiences no convictions of guilt for subsequently violating a promise made under such a mental pressure, nor is he condemned by the moral sense of the community at large. They perceive almost instinctively, that, by a sudden conjuncture of circumstances, for which the individual is not himself responsible, the due balance and harmony of the powers of the mind has been destroyed ; and that it is unreasonable, in such a state of things, to expect results which can properly be the subjects either of praise or blame.

*§ 184. Illustration of the same subject from cases of torture.*

We may propose another illustration, which will help to make the subject more fully and clearly understood.

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sed to be such as no ordinary degree of self-command is able to resist. And if we were only satisfied that these motives are *perfectly* irresistible, we would not ascribe to him any guilt at all.”\*—This is undoubtedly the true philosophy in this matter.

§ 185. *Historical illustrations of the subject.*

And here, with the permission of the reader, we will introduce a piece of literary history, which we find in D’Israeli, who, in his attempts to interest the curiosity and to give pleasure, has, in various passages, thrown much light upon the human mind. In the reign of Charles I. of England, a man by the name of Felton, the assassinator of the Duke of Buckingham, was menaced with torture for the purpose and with the expectation of extracting from him the names of his accomplices. The communication, that it was the king’s pleasure that he should be put to the torture, was made to him by Lord Dorset, who accordingly gave him notice to prepare for the rack. Felton, after solemnly affirming that his purpose to commit the crime was not known to any man living, said: “But if it be his majesty’s pleasure, I am ready to suffer whatever his majesty will have inflicted upon me. Yet this I must tell you by the way, *that if I be put upon the rack, I will accuse you, my Lord Dorset, and none but yourself!*”† Here is a text in ethical casuistry, affording abundant food for meditation. Felton foresaw that it would probably be impossible for him to endure the suffering which would be inflicted; that he would be under a *mental necessity* of accusing somebody;

\* *Philosophy of the Moral and Active Powers, Appendix i., § iii.*

† D’Israeli’s *Curiosities of Literature*, vol. iii.

Such illustrations and facts show clearly and decisively that there is such a thing as mental enthralment ; that it is not a mere fiction, but exists as truly and undeniably as enthralment of the body. And such being the fact, it becomes an important subject both of philosophical and ethical inquiry.

§ 186. *The will enthralled by the indulgence of the appetites.*

With these general explanations before us on the nature of Mental Slavery, and in particular of the slavery of the will, we are the better prepared to contemplate the subject by going more into particulars.—We have instances of the prostration and enslavement of the Will, unhappily too often witnessed, in the undue indulgence of the Appetites. Look at the man who habitually indulges himself in the use of ardent spirits. Every time he carries the intoxicating potion to his lips, the sensation of taste, in accordance with the law of our nature that the various states of the mind become more prompt and vigorous in their exercise by repetition, acquires an increased degree of pleasantness. At the same time, the feeling of uneasiness, when the sensation is not indulged by drinking, is increased in a corresponding degree ; and, of course, the *desire*, which is necessarily attendant upon the uneasy feeling, becomes in like manner more and more importunate and imperative. During all this time the internal harmony of the mind is interrupted. The other parts of the mind revolt, if we may so speak, against the usurpations of this unholy and destructive desire. The reason points out the evil consequences ; the natural desire of esteem throws itself in front of the

sities and Passions or Affections. It is well understood, that our propensities and passions of whatever kind, as well as the appetites, grow stronger and stronger by repetition. And there are not unfrequently cases where they have become so intense, after years of such repetition, as to control, or, in other words, enthrall the voluntary power almost entirely. And we accordingly proceed to remark, that one of the most common and lamentable forms in which mental slavery exists, is the aggravated or inordinate state of Acquisitiveness or the Propensity to acquire.

We sometimes find men, for instance, so entirely absorbed in the pursuit of wealth as to annihilate them, as it were, to everything else. This pursuit so completely occupies every thought and feeling as to exclude all other objects, and to render them mentally debased and subjugated to the lowest degree. Individuals are to be found, men too of great wealth, who are so entirely under the excessive influence of the acquisitive propensity, that they cannot be persuaded to expend enough for the common comforts of life, and who will even gather up the cast-off clothes, and sticks and nails, that are found in the street, to add something, even the merest trifle, to their heaps of treasure.

The reader will find some account of the characteristics of the insane AURI FAMES, as he terms it, in the medical writings of Dr. Good, an acute and laborious observer of nature both in her material and immaterial forms.\*

\* Good's Study of Medicine, vol. iv., p. 132, Cooper's edition.

its natural or acquired energy, that encroachments cannot be made upon it from any other source without great danger. Unfortunately, the various situations in which the Emperor of the French was placed, all tended to foster the love of power and domination. The acquisition of supreme dominion over the nations was the burden of his meditations, the constant object of his desires. In the end, the lust of power became so predominant, that, in all matters where it was concerned, there no longer remained any authority, any effective power of the mind, that seemed to be capable of checking and controlling it. That strong and impetuous Will, which had subdued all others before it, was insidiously approached by this enemy from beneath, and, before the danger was fully perceived, was taken captive and bound with cords of iron. Napoleon himself was conscious of his situation ; and feeling within him the demonstrations of this incontrollable impulse, usurping an authority to which nature never entitled it, and driving him hither and thither in a mad and measureless career, he began to talk about his "horoscope," his "star invisible to others," "unalterable fate," and "destiny." This is the common language of persons who have lost the true balance of the mind, and have permitted unauthorized passions to gain the ascendancy.

#### § 189. *The will enslaved by the indulgence of the passions.*

One of the most common instances of an enslaved will is that of persons who have long indulged in angry and violent passions. It is said of Frederic William of Prussia, the father of Frederic the Great, that he was "of a temper so violent and ungovernable, that his passions al-

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interrupt the order of the mind's action ; not only in respect to the Will, but generally. Such cases we have not now particularly in view ; but others of greater permanency, though perhaps sometimes of less violence.

It is sometimes the case, that the domestic affections, the love of parents for their children, or of children for their parents, or that complexity of deep and sacred feeling which is embraced in the remembrance and the love of home, so pervades and fills the mind, as greatly, in certain situations, to embarrass the action of the Will, and, in fact, to subject it to a greater or less degree of enthralment. If the individual, in whom the domestic affections exist in a very intense degree, is for some reason separated from the hills and woods of his childhood, from the hearth of his fathers, from the endearing company of those who sustain the most intimate relations, how greatly is his heart affected ! What exquisite anguish fills his breast ! Whatever plans he forms, whatever course of life he proposes to enter upon, he finds that the lovely and cherished image of the past constantly rises before him, and, by its contrast with the present, renders him wretched. He makes various efforts to free himself from the pressure of this mental thraldom ; he calls up all the resources of his intellect ; he reasons upon the perplexities and miseries of his situation, but all in vain. The fatal passion, so deeply rooted in his bosom, constantly besets him ; it passes before and obscures the intellectual vision ; it prostrates and scatters to the wind the determinations, even the most deliberate and sacred resolves, of the voluntary power.

If we may believe the statements of Rousseau and other writers, those inhabitants of the retired and solitary mountains and vales of Switzerland, who have been employed

in foreign military service, have sometimes sickened and died under the influence of this strong and *incontrollable* love of country and home.

“ The intrepid Swiss, that guards a foreign shore,  
Condemned to climb his mountain cliffs no more,  
If chance he hears the song so sweetly wild,  
Which on those cliffs his infant hours beguiled,  
Melts at the long-lost scenes that round him rise,  
And sinks, a martyr to repentant sighs.”

§ 191. *Of the slavery of the will in connexion with moral accountability.*

In concluding the remarks of this chapter, it is proper briefly to notice an interesting inquiry which naturally comes up here. The inquiry we refer to is, What bearing have these views on moral accountability?—And we may undoubtedly answer it by saying, in general terms, that our moral accountability remains, in a greater or less degree, so long as the due proportion or balance between the various powers of the mind is not *wholly* destroyed. If we permit the undue and unholy exercise of any appetite or passion, we are indeed **ENSLAVED** (in the sense in which slavery or enthralment is predicable of the mind) by such appetite or passion; but we are not, therefore, removed beyond the reach of accountability and guilt; but, on the contrary, are both accountable and highly criminal, *so long as there remain in our minds, either in the Will or anywhere else, any powers of right judgment and resistance.* When such powers of judgment and resistance no longer remain, then our actions, of whatever kind they may be, are neither criminal nor meritorious, although we may be criminal for bringing ourselves into this situation. Mental slavery, when it becomes so in-

tense as actually to disorganize the mind and to pass over into the regions of insanity, destroys accountability, but not before. So long as it does not pass within the limits of mental alienation, and become merged in insanity, it is so far from rendering a person guiltless, that it might not be difficult to show that guilt or sin is identical with it. In other words, THAT THERE IS NO SIN WHERE THERE IS NO SLAVERY.

The Scriptures themselves seem to recognise some such view. "Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, whosoever committeth sin is the *servant* of sin."—"But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into *captivity* to the law of sin."—"Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the *bondage of corruption*, into the glorious *liberty* of the children of God."—"For when ye were *servants* of sin, ye were free from righteousness."—"While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the *servants of corruption*; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage."—John viii., 34. Rom. vi., 20; vii., 23; viii., 21. 2 Peter ii., 19.

It will be kept in mind, however, that we do not intend to apply these remarks to cases where the Will is brought into subjection by means extraneous to the person himself, and operating upon him without his concurrence or consent, as in the case just now referred to, of extreme suffering by torture. In all such cases, it is undeniable that moral accountability, on the part of the person who is subjected to such suffering, is either greatly diminished, or ceases to exist altogether. Under the pressure of a suffering so intense as wholly to prostrate the action of the voluntary power, he is no more accountable for what

he does, than he would be for what he is compelled to do by actual bodily constraint.\*

\* NOTE.—It will perhaps occur to the reader, that this part of our subject has an important Theological aspect. There is a philosophical basis for the question, and it may always arise, whether, in respect to a particular object or class of objects, the Will may not be under enthralment, whatever may be its character in other respects. Accordingly, the Theological question is, whether the human mind, either in consequence of Adam's fall, or of its own tendencies and acts, or of both combined, has not so far lost its freedom as to be unable to serve and glorify God in a suitable manner, without especial divine assistance. We believe that Theologians and religious men generally, especially those who have made the highest attainments in the Divine Life, are nearly unanimous in the opinion that such especial divine assistance is needed. They base this opinion upon a careful examination of human character and experience, as well as of the Holy Scriptures. As this Treatise is designed to be Philosophical and Practical rather than Theological, we may perhaps be excused from entering into this view of the general subject, deeply interesting as it is; especially as a thorough examination of it (and nothing short of a thorough examination would be a profitable one) would extend the present work too far.

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**P A R T   I V.**

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## CHAPTER I.

### NATURE OF MENTAL POWER.

#### § 192. *Of the distinction between liberty and power.*

WE now enter again upon a distinct series of subjects, which present the WILL to our notice in a new aspect. They are subsequent in the order of examination, but they are not wanting either in importance or interest. In this last Part of our Work, we propose to examine the Power of the will and the various topics that are naturally connected with it.—But in making the POWER of the will a distinct subject of examination, it is proper to remark, that we deviate from the view of many writers, and some of them of no mean rank, who seem to have considered the Power of the will and its Liberty as one and the same thing. And this confusion of things which are entirely distinct, has been one cause of that obscurity which has ever rested in too great a degree on the whole subject.

It is not altogether surprising, however, that an error should have been committed here, when we consider how apt we are to confound together objects, whatever grounds there may be for a distinction between them, which are often united together in our thoughts. The material world is so constituted, that in our perceptions of extension and colour, we find them necessarily always accompanying each other; so that, after a time, we find it very difficult to exclude from our notion of the sensation of colour the idea of extension. And it is undoubtedly

much the same in all similar cases ; and among others in that of **FREEDOM** and **POWER**, which also are found to be closely associated together. It is obvious that there is no freedom where there is no power ; it seems to be undeniable, that in the nature of things they go together ; and they are, therefore, so closely connected in our thoughts, that we ultimately find it difficult to make the proper distinction between them.

§ 193. *Proof of the distinction between liberty and power.*

We presume to anticipate, that, after the reader has gone through with what we have to say on this general subject of voluntary power, especially if he will take the pains to compare it with what has already been said on the nature of liberty, he will not be disposed to take exceptions to the distinction which we assert to exist between **LIBERTY** and **POWER**. And yet, although it is unnecessary, in this stage of our remarks, to spend much time on this particular topic, there is a propriety in briefly introducing a few circumstances in support of the distinction before us.—And, accordingly, we remark, in the first place, that there are sometimes diversities or different degrees in the amount of power, even to a marked and decided extent, while the amount of freedom is essentially the same, which could not well be the case if liberty and power were identical. Take a single illustration. There is as much freedom, in any true and proper sense of the term freedom, in the mind of a child, whose intellect, just beginning to open, cannot expand itself beyond the limits of his native village, as in that of a philosopher, whose thoughts embrace the world, and

even systems of worlds. The sphere of the child's mind is indeed a very limited one in comparison with that of the philosopher ; but the degree of freedom enjoyed by it is essentially the same. But while there is undeniably in these two cases an equal, or nearly equal degree of mental liberty within the respective spheres of the mind's operations, no one will undertake to say that there is the same, or nearly the same degree of mental power.

Again, if we take two persons equally advanced in years, we shall, in many cases, notice similar results. A truly virtuous man will always possess and exhibit a high degree of mental freedom. A vicious man will suffer under some form of mental distortion unfavourable to freedom. But, although the latter possesses less mental freedom, it is possible that he may possess much more mental power than the other.

§ 194. *The distinction of power and liberty involved in the fact of our being able to form the abstract ideas of power and liberty.*

In the second place, our consciousness (that internal reflection which we are able to bestow upon what takes place in the mind itself) assures us, that we are able to form the abstract idea of liberty, and also that we are able to form the abstract idea of power ; and if our internal mental experience thus assures us of the existence of the two, it of course assures us of a distinction between them. Every simple idea, as it is a unit and is inseparable into parts, must necessarily have a character of its own, which is definite and immutable. And if we are capable, therefore, of forming these two distinct ideas of power and liberty (as the general consciousness on the

subject seems clearly to testify) it will necessarily follow, that they are entirely distinct in their nature; and although they may be closely connected together by accidental circumstances, or in any other way, so much so that we cannot conceive of the one without implying the existence of the other; it is still true, that in themselves considered they are entirely separate, each having an entity and a character of its own. And if the ideas of liberty and power are thus distinct from each other, then we are under the necessity of drawing the inference, that the things for which they stand, or, in other words, that power and liberty, in their state of actual realization, are different from each other.

§ 195. *Distinction of power and liberty shown from language.*

That there exists a distinction between mental power and mental liberty, and that this distinction is to be fully recognised and received, seems to be evident, in the third place, from the structure of language. In the English language we have the two terms in question, which we constantly use, not as synonymous terms, but as truly expressive of things which are different from each other. And as it is the same in all other languages, we may well regard this as a circumstance which decisively indicates the general conviction and belief on this subject. The existence of a belief so general and so deeply founded does not appear to admit of any satisfactory explanation, except on the ground of the actual existence of the distinction to which the belief relates.

§ 196. *Further shown from the fact of our possessing a moral nature.*

Furthermore, the possession of mental power, as well as of mental liberty, is involved in the fact, that man is a moral and accountable being. In all the leading questions which have a relation to our moral nature, we are thrown back upon the elementary suggestions, upon the first and immutable principles of our mental constitution. Our Creator has not left these questions to be settled by the abstruse deductions of philosophers; but has written their solution in letters of light on the tablet of the common heart of mankind. All classes and descriptions of men are alike capable of understanding their import, and of rendering their interpretation. They all know, hardly less than they know their own identity, and far better than any human philosophy can teach them, that moral responsibility implies the existence of power, and that the defect of power necessarily involves the negation of accountability.

“There is,” says Dr. Reid, “a perfect correspondence between power on the one hand, and moral obligation and accountableness on the other. They not only correspond in general, as they respect voluntary actions only, but every limitation of the first produces a corresponding limitation of the two last. This indeed amounts to nothing more than that maxim of common sense, confirmed by Divine authority, that to whom much is given, of him much will be required.”—“A certain degree of active power is the talent which God has given to every rational accountable creature, and of which he will require an account. If man had no power, he would have nothing to

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account for. All wise and all foolish conduct, all virtue and vice, consist in the right use or in the abuse of that power which God has given us. If man had no power, he could neither be wise nor foolish, virtuous nor vicious.”\*

#### § 197. *Origin of the idea of power in Original Suggestion.*

What has so far been said in this Chapter, at least when taken in connexion with the illustrations of voluntary power hereafter given, abundantly shows, that there is a distinction between power and liberty, and that it is important not to confound them together. The subject of power, therefore, is a subject by itself; and requiring a separate and careful consideration.—And, in entering upon the examination of this subject, it seems to be a proper place here to say a few words in explanation of the origin of the idea of POWER. Power is obviously not anything which is directly addressed to the outward senses. It is not addressed to the sense of sight, as colours are; nor to the sense of hearing, as sounds are; nor to the taste; nor to any other of the outward senses. We cannot see it, nor hear it, nor touch it, nor taste it, although it is everywhere actually diffused; for it is a first truth and undeniably certain, that, wherever there is existence, there is power, either actually in the thing itself or in some way connected with it.

If the idea of power is not to be ascribed in its origin to external perception in any of its forms, we must look within for its rise. And in doing this, we find ourselves unable to assert anything more than this, that it is the result (that is to say, it is made known to us by means of

\* Reid's Active Powers of the Human Mind, Essay iv.

it) of that Original Suggestion, which has already been referred to as the true source of our idea of liberty. In other words, we are so constituted, that, on certain occasions and under certain circumstances, the idea of power naturally and necessarily arises or is suggested within us

§ 198. *Occasions of the origin of the idea of power.*

But what are those occasions or circumstances just now spoken of, on which the faculty of Original Suggestion is brought into action, and in connexion with which it gives existence and birth to the idea in question ?

Although on this point our views may, perhaps, be at variance with those of some other writers, the occasions, so far as we are able to judge, appear to be threefold.—(1.) All cases of antecedence and sequence in the natural world. We are so constituted, that, in connexion with such cases of antecedence and sequence, we are led, at a very early period of life, to frame the proposition and to receive it as an undeniable truth, that there can be no beginning or change of existence without a cause. This proposition involves the idea of efficiency or power.—(2.) The control of the Will over the muscular action. We are so constituted, that, whenever we will to put a part of the body in motion, and the motion follows the volition, we have the idea of power.—(3.) The control of the Will over the other mental powers. Within certain limits and to a certain extent, there seems to be ground for supposing that the will is capable of exercising a directing control over the mental as well as over the bodily powers. And whenever we are conscious of such control being exercised, whether it be greater or less, occasion is furnished for the origin of this idea. It is then called forth

or SUGGESTED.—(See the vol. on the Intellect, Chap. on Suggestion.)

It is proper to add here, that the idea of power, like that of freedom or liberty, is simple, and, consequently, is not susceptible of definition, although no one can be supposed to be ignorant of what is meant by the term.

§ 199. *The idea of power involves the reality of power.*

But because the idea of power is undefinable, we are not, therefore, to suppose that it represents nothing ; in other words, that power is in itself a chimera and nonentity ; a mere baseless fiction of the mind, like those shadowy and illusive pictures, which in times of ignorance and superstition are seen written in the air. This would be a great mistake. It is true that there may be complex ideas of things, as Mr. Locke has correctly maintained, which are chimerical ; that is to say, which have nothing corresponding to them in outward objects, or in anything else, such as the ideas of a hypogriff, dragon, centaur, gold lighter than water, &c. But this want of correspondence between the idea and the object to which it relates or professes to relate, is never experienced in the case of simple ideas ; and it is not at all surprising that we should find this difference in these two classes of our notions. Complex ideas, so far as the combination and arrangement of the subordinate elements is concerned, is the work of man ; and it may sometimes happen, therefore, that they are expressive, or, rather, profess to be so, of what has no real existence. But simple ideas, on the other hand, which result necessarily from the action of the mind under given circumstances, may be regarded as truly the work of the great Author of our men-

tal nature ; and it would be inconsistent with our ideas of his perfections, particularly his truth, as well as with our own consciousness and experience, to suppose that they ever express anything other than an unchangeable reality.

§ 200. *Things exist which are not made known by the senses.*

Can it be necessary to say that there are existences, at least that there are *realities*, (whether they are existences in themselves, or the mere attributes of things, or relations,) which have no outward and visible representation ? We know that the contrary supposition would not be inconsistent with the philosophy of Condillac and Helvetius ; but present appearances, the result of patient and repeated inquiries, seem clearly to indicate, that the philosophical systems of those writers cannot, in this particular at least, be sustained. It is undoubtedly true, that we do not have a knowledge of Power by means of any direct action on the outward senses ; that it has no form and outline, as if it were some material entity ; that it is not the subject of any process of material admeasurement ; that it is not an object of sight, hearing, or touch. But the leading writers on the mind agree in assuring us, that there are inward sources of knowledge ; that there are things, and the attributes of things, which are not susceptible of any material or outward representation ; but are made known by an original developement exclusively taking place in the mind itself. And POWER, whether it be something in itself, or the attribute of something else, is one of this class.

It would not be difficult to give instances in illustra-

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tion of these statements. Is there no such thing as design or foresight? Is there no such thing as identity, unity, or number; as succession, and time, and space? Is there no such thing as intelligence or truth, as wrong or rectitude? And yet these are not made known by any direct action on the senses, but by the mind alone; by the creative energy of the spiritual principle within us, called into action in the various circumstances incident to its present situation. And it is certain that we have no more knowledge of these than we have of Power.

*§ 201. Of power as an attribute of the human mind.*

Without saying anything further on the existence and nature of power in general, and of the way in which we have a knowledge of it, we now proceed to remark upon power as existing in, and as an attribute of, the human mind. There is power somewhere. Is it also in the mind of man? Does it reside there as something substantive and positive, or is it merely an appearance?

In proof of the position, that power, in the strict sense of the term, is an attribute of the human mind, we may safely appeal, in the first place, to each one's consciousness. Every one is supposed to know what power is, although, as has been said, it is not susceptible of definition. And every man is conscious that he possesses this power in himself; not perhaps in so high a degree as it actually exists in some others, but yet in some degree. He is not conscious that it exists in him in the form of a separate faculty, analogous to perception or memory; but that it exists as an attribute of the whole mind, and is diffused, in a greater or less degree, through all its faculties. That

is to say, having from the earliest period formed a distinct idea of power, and already knowing what it is, he has an original feeling or conviction that such is the case ; that in every exercise or operation of the mind there is and must be power. It is a matter upon which, so far as it relates to himself, he does not profess to reason ; for the conviction is an original one, approximating to the nature of an intuition ; and it is therefore, in his view, neither assailable by argument nor capable of being sustained in that way.

Furthermore, the existence of power as an attribute of the human mind is proved by our observation of others. When we carefully consider the wonderful efforts of the human intellect, with what rapidity and consummate skill it embraces and analyzes the most difficult subjects, have we not evidence of power ? When we see men controlling their passions, sustaining themselves in meekness and fortitude amid the most cruel assaults, have we not additional evidence ? When we read of the Republics of antiquity, of the eloquence that shook and swayed the fierce democracy of Athens, and controlled the proud hearts and intellects of Rome, and in later times has risen with no less ascendancy in the stormy periods of the French and English Parliaments, can we believe that these astonishing effects are the results of minds constituted without any infusion of the element of power ? Might we not as well turn our eyes to the sun in the heavens, when he throws his bright beams over the mountain-tops and the green woods of summer, and say there is no light ?

¶ 202. *Further shown by a reference to the Divine Mind*

On this subject (the existence of power as truly an attribute of the human mind) it may not be improper, although it is to be done with suitable humility and circumspection, to reason from the Supreme Being to the creatures he has made. We are informed, in the pages of Holy Writ, that man was created in the image of his Maker; and it cannot be doubted that the similitude was mental, and not bodily. It was the mind, the spiritual part, that was honoured with bearing the glorious impress of the Divine lineaments.

It may indeed be said, by way of objection, that the alleged similitude between man and his Maker is limited to man's moral nature; but it should be recollect that it is impossible entirely to separate man's moral from his intellectual part. As the moral nature is based upon the intellectual, (for there obviously can be no accountability where there are no powers of perceiving and judging,) the existence of the former of course involves and implies the existence of the latter. If there be a reality in the distinction between right and wrong, there must be not only feeling and volition, but intelligence; and we cannot conceive of virtue or vice in connexion with the absence of either of them.—With these views of the connexion existing among all the parts of man's mental nature, the intellectual, sensitive, and voluntary, we understand the statement of man's primitive creation in the image of God to mean, that there was really a likeness in *kind*, however diverse in *degree*; and that this similitude extends to all parts of our mental nature, with the exception of what are purely instinctive, or are essential-

ly connected with our bodily and material organization. The Fall of Man, it is true, has injured and defaced the original similitude ; but, with the exception of the principle of HOLY LOVE, the distinctive lineaments and attributes remain.

Now no one will deny that power is an attribute of the Divine Mind ; and hence, reasoning from the Maker to that which is made, from the original and self-existent Archetype to the derived and dependent similitude, we have good grounds to believe, that power exists positively and substantively in man as well as the Being who formed him. "If it is granted," says an American writer, "that God is an efficient cause ; that in him is energy, activity, which constitutes Him an active agent ; why may not man be endued with the same principle, so as to make him an active agent ? His being dependent, and his powers limited, are no objection of any weight against viewing him an active agent. If God can create a dependent, limited being, why can he not endue him with an *active*, dependent, limited principle of action ? I see no objection of weight against this, and, of course, prefer viewing a moral agent as really having in his heart the same active, energetic principle as we suppose God possesses. It is granted, this active principle in man, which renders him an agent, is dependent and limited. So is his being ; yet he is a real being, distinct from God."\*

This, then, is the view which we think ourselves amply justified in taking, viz., that the Supreme Being has created men with power ; that he has communicated of his own fulness to those who would have been wanting without this communication. As the planetary orbs, while

\* Burton's Metaphysics, Ethics, and Theology, Essay xiii.

they revolve around the sun, and are dependent upon him for motion and light, have nevertheless a distinct existence; in like manner, all intellectual and sentient beings, in their various orders, from the archangel down to man, derive their existence and support from the great Source of all knowledge and efficiency; and although they are created in the image of God and are constantly sustained by Him, have yet a distinct existence, a distinct though dependent agency, and revolve in their own appropriate sphere.

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## CHAPTER II.

### POWER OF THE WILL.

#### § 203. *Proof of power in the will from the analogy of the mind.*

BUT it is not enough to explain the nature of power, and to assert its existence as an attribute of the mind in general terms; we proceed now to consider its existence in that particular faculty or department of the mind, which is denominated the WILL. Power is not only predicable of the mind in a general way, but it is predicable of its parts, and particularly and emphatically so of our voluntary nature. The analogy running through our mental constitution furnishes some grounds and authority for this remark. Men universally speak (and they undoubtedly believe they have good reason so to do) of the power of sensation, of the power of perception, of the power of memory, imagination, reasoning, &c. The

structure of all languages (for they appear to be all alike in this respect) proves what they think ; and we may add, proves what they *know* on this subject. It is natural for the man who perceives to say that he has the power of perception ; the man who remembers or reasons, asserts without hesitation, that he has the *power* of remembering or reasoning ; and it is impossible to convince these men, either that these expressions are improperly applied, or that they are nugatory and convey no distinct meaning.— But if there is truly a foundation for such expressions, and if there is a propriety and truth in the use of them, is there not equal propriety in speaking of the POWER of the WILL ? If every other mental action clearly and convincingly indicates to us the existence of an innate energy corresponding to such action, it cannot be supposed that the act of willing alone, which is a pre-eminent and leading exercise of the mind, exists independently of any actual basis of voluntary energy. The analogy, therefore, of the mental constitution, (for we are undoubtedly at liberty to reason from analogy in this case, as well as others,) distinctly leads to the result that power is appropriate to, and is an attribute of, the Will.

#### § 204. *The power of the will restricted and subordinate.*

But although the Will has power, it is not therefore independent. We have already seen ample evidence of its subjection to law. And in this respect it is on the same footing with the other powers of the mind. There is no exercise of memory without something remembered ; no perception without an object perceived ; and there are not only objects which the action of these faculties necessarily has relation to, but there are various other restric-

tions (without any impropriety of language we might term them *laws*) by which that action is governed. But are we to say on this account that the attribute of power does not belong to the perception, the memory, or the process of reasoning ? If so, we must, for like reasons, exclude it from every other mental susceptibility, which is the same as to exclude it from the whole mind ; for the mental susceptibilities are nothing more than the mind itself acting in various ways. And a mind without power is not an operative principle, but a principle, or, rather, an object operated upon ; and is, of course, destitute of all attractions and worth in itself, and of all moral accountability to anything else. There may be power, therefore, which power is, nevertheless, under direction and control. And accordingly, while we maintain the existence of power in the Will, we must not forget its subjection to law, nor suppose that the one is at all inconsistent with the other.

#### § 205. *Proof of power in the will from internal experience.*

That power is predicable of the will, as well as of any other faculty of the mind, or of the mind as a whole, is evinced not only by the analogy running through the mental structure, but by other considerations. Among other views to be taken of the subject now before us, may we not, in this inquiry as well as in others, make an appeal to our own internal experience ? In other words, have we not, beyond all doubt, a testimony within us, a direct and decisive internal evidence of power in the acts of the Will ? Do we not feel and know it to be so ?—Let us take a familiar instance as a test of these inquiries.

When a person wills to go to a certain place, or wills to do a certain thing, does the volition appear to have been wrought within himself by an extraneous cause? Does it appear to have been created and placed there without any personal agency and effort? Or does it rather distinctly and satisfactorily indicate to him an energy of his own: Few persons, it is believed, will hesitate as to what answer to give.

Our consciousness, therefore, distinctly assures us, (although it is beyond all question that the Will is circumscribed and regulated by its appropriate laws,) that within the limits constituting its appropriate sphere, its action truly originates in its own power. It wills, because it has the power to will. It acts, because it possesses that energy which is requisite to constitute the basis of action. In the language of one of the characters of the great English dramatist, when pressed for the reasons of a certain course of proceeding,

“The cause is in my *Will*; I *will* not come.”

§ 206. *Proved from the ability which we have to direct our attention to particular subjects.*

In one particular at least, our internal experience seems to be clear and decisive, viz., that we are able to direct our attention to some subjects of inquiry in preference to others. It is admitted that we cannot call up a thought or a train of thought by a mere and direct act of volition; although we have an *indirect* power in this respect, which is not without its important results. But when various trains of thought are passing through the mind, we are enabled, as it is presumed every one must be conscious, to direct our attention and to fix it firmly upon

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one thought or one train of thought in preference to another. It is undoubtedly the tendency of association to remove the thought or the train of thought, whatever it is, from the mind ; but the power of the Will, where it is decisively exerted, can counteract this tendency, and keep the mind in essentially the same position for a greater or less length of time. And it does not appear what explanation can possibly be given of the fact, that we thus frequently delay upon subjects, and revolve them in our contemplation, except on the ground of a real and effective energy of the Will.

§ 207. *Proof of power in the will from observation.*

Furthermore, the phenomena of human nature, as they come within our constant observation, cannot be explained, except on the supposition that the Will is not the subject of any extraneous operation or power, in such a sense as entirely to exclude power or agency of its own. Do we not often see instances of persons, in whom vigour of the Will is a characteristic and predominant trait ; and whose character and conduct cannot be explained, except on the ground that they possess a voluntary energy of their own, and that, too, in a high degree ? Men have often been placed in the most trying circumstances, called to endure the pains of imprisonment, and hunger and thirst, and torture and exile and death ; and they have undergone it all with a most astonishing fortitude and calmness, without shedding a tear or uttering a lamentation. Here is something difficult to be explained, unless we take into consideration that innate power which we assert to be an attribute of the Will.

Whatever may be said of the fervid sincerity of his re-

ligion or the natural benevolence of his heart, are we able satisfactorily to explain the character and deeds of the illustrious Howard, except by taking this view ? "The energy of his determination," says a judicious and valuable writer, "was so great, that if, instead of being habitual, it had been shown only for a short time on particular occasions, it would have appeared a vehement impetuosity ; but, by being unintermittent, it had an equability of manner which scarcely appeared to exceed the tone of a calm constancy, it was so totally the reverse of anything like turbulence or agitation. It was the calmness of an intensity, kept uniform by the nature of the human mind forbidding it to be more, and by the character of the individual forbidding it to be less."\*

The case of Howard, marked and extraordinary as it is, does not stand alone. Every age of the world and every class of society have their men of this stamp. Extraordinary endowments of the will are as necessary to support society, and to meet the exigences of our situation, as extraordinary endowments of intellect. But, unfortunately, though they are given in the discretion and wisdom of the great Dispenser of all mental gifts, they are not always wisely and righteously employed. A multitude of instances, of a character both good and evil, will occur to every one ; among others, Alexander, Cæsar, Regulus, Charles XII., Hannibal, Columbus, the Apostle Paul, Cromwell, William Tell, Chatham, Nelson, Ledyard, Mungo Park, Napoleon, John Knox, Luther, Whitefield, Wesley, and numerous others, whose names are permanently enrolled in the religious and political history of men. The language of Ledyard will show the intensity of determination existing in such men. "My

\* Foster's Essay on Decision of Character.

distresses have been greater than I have ever owned, or ever *will* own to any man. I have known hunger and nakedness to the utmost extremity of human suffering ; I have known what it is to have food given me as charity to a madman ; and I have at times been obliged to shelter myself under the miseries of that character to avoid a heavier calamity. Such evils are terrible to bear, but they never have yet had *power to turn me from my purpose.*"

§ 208. *Of power of the will as exhibited in patience under suffering.*

We invite the particular attention of the reader to the view of the subject which is now presented before him. If he will take the trouble to contemplate it steadily, we doubt not it will have its due weight. We wish to be understood as distinctly and fully maintaining, on the ground of common observation, that the Will has an actual and substantive power ; and that it is utterly impossible to explain the phenomena of human nature except by taking this view. Nor do we propose, in support of our positions, to introduce merely extraordinary instances of energy of the Will ; but, on the contrary, should not hesitate to rest the issue of the inquiry on an appeal to cases which are of common occurrence. We have an evidence (an unobtrusive one, perhaps, but still worthy of our notice) of the power of the Will in that patience and submissiveness which we not unfrequently witness in the ordinary trials of life. Persons who have had their sensibilities wounded day after day, and hour after hour, have been seen at the same time to wear the smile of cheerfulness ; and so far from uttering complaints and in-

dulging a rebellious spirit, they have been uniformly kind to those who were the causes of their suffering. Others, who have suffered under the approaches of a wasting and insidious disease, have completely succeeded in quieting the emotions within them, and permitted no murmur to arise ; they have even blessed these trying visitations of Providence, and have shed a loveliness, glorious for themselves and cheering to the heart of the spectator, over the chamber of sickness and death. It is not enough to say that they may have possessed an enlightened understanding or a virtuous heart ; nothing but the innate energy of the Will (however it may have been supported by correct views and virtuous principles) could have silenced and subdued the secret voice of anguish.

§ 209. *Illustration of the subject from the command of temper.*

The fact, that men are not governed by a fatality impressed upon them from an exterior cause, but have an efficiency in themselves, may be further illustrated from the control which they are seen to exercise over their passions, in what is called *command of temper*. Few sayings are more celebrated than that of Socrates on a certain occasion to his servant, that he would beat him if he were not angry. Hume, who is entitled to the credit of being a careful observer of human nature, speaks expressly of the remarkable command of temper which was possessed by Henry IV. of England ; and it is not uncommon to find this trait pointed out by historians and biographers as one worthy of particular notice. The biographer of our illustrious countryman, Mr. Jay, says, that "he sought not the glory which cometh from

man, and the only power of which he was covetous was the *command of himself*.”\* And this power, although he was obliged to contend with a natural irritability of temper, he exhibited in a very high degree.

In a recent interesting Work, entitled Recollections of the House of Lords, there is a sketch of the character and political labours of Earl Grey; a name familiar to those who are acquainted with the leading events of modern English history. The anonymous writer, who everywhere discovers his knowledge of the operations and tendencies of the human mind, speaks of him as follows. “He was not so insensitive to the attacks of his opponents as was generally supposed. Those who knew him intimately were well aware, that his sensibilities in this respect were not blunted by the cares and anxieties of office. But he had great **COMMAND OVER HIS TEMPER**. His philosophy had taught him the great advantages to a man holding so important a situation as he did, of concealing any soreness he might feel from the conduct of an opponent. He knew that to betray a loss of temper at the attacks of the adverse party was precisely the way to invite a repetition of such attacks. He therefore resolved to subject his temper, in this respect, to a severe course of discipline. *He successfully carried his resolution into effect!*”

#### § 210. *Further illustrations of this subject.*

It would not be difficult to specify other distinguished men, both of our own and other countries, who knew how to conciliate the actings of a sensitive and enkindled heart with the coolest circumspection and the most per-

\* Life of John Jay, vol. i., chap. xii.

fect self-command. But this is not necessary, since the trait in question is one daily coming within our notice. It is not uncommon, in almost every village and neighbourhood, to observe persons of naturally quick feelings, and whose passions are obviously violent, and are prone to foam and toss about like the waves of the sea, who nevertheless have those passions under complete control, even in the most trying circumstances.

And is it not a duty to exercise this control over the passions ? "He that ruleth his spirit," says Solomon, "is better than he that taketh a city." And again, "He that hath no rule over his own spirit, is like a city that is broken down and without walls." "Be ye angry," says the Apostle, "and sin not ; let not the sun go down upon your wrath." Here, then, is a great practical fact in the philosophy of the mind, and upon which important and solemn duties are based, viz., that the passions are under our control. But where is the power that controls them ? It is not enough to say that this power of regulation and control is deposited in the understanding ? It is true that the understanding can suggest various and important reasons why this control should be exercised ; but it cannot of itself render those reasons effective and available. The greatest light in the Understanding, and even if it were carried into the region of the Affections and the Conscience, could never bring this great result to pass without the co-operation of the effective energies of the Will.

*§ 211. Proved from the concealment of the passions on sudden and trying occasions.*

There are instances where the passions are repressed, or at least concealed, for the purpose of forwarding some

ulterior end, which indicate the existence of power in the will. We might, perhaps, leave this statement just as it is, to be filled up by the private and personal recollections of the reader. But history, which furnishes so many valuable expositions of the passions and the will, is not without its striking instances here. It is mentioned by those writers who have given an account of Sylla the Roman dictator, as a marked trait in his character, that he was capable of acting the dissembler to perfection. He was engaged in forming and executing gigantic plans for the extension of the Roman empire, at the same time that he had formed other plans of an entirely different character, and based upon the most dreadful passions, which he silently and calmly laid up to be executed at some distant day. One would have thought that his whole soul (such was his consummate ability in the management both of his present designs and of those passions which were afterward to be indulged) was exclusively taken up with his present business, and possessed no thought or feeling for anything else.

The conspirators against Julius Cæsar, after they had fully determined on his assassination, an event which involved either his death or their own, and perhaps both, were in the almost daily habit of meeting and transacting business with him; and yet that wonderful man was utterly unable to detect in the language, manner, or looks of the conspirators any evidence or intimations of their atrocious design. Does not this indicate on the part of the conspirators power of Will? Cicero seems to have been excluded from the conspiracy, chiefly because he was supposed to be wanting in that decision and fortitude of purpose which was requisite to the occasion.

§ 212 *Further instances of concealment and repression of the passions.*

We may go further and say, that people may not only avail themselves of the power of the Will to subdue their passions or to conceal them, and that, in so doing, they prove the existence of power in the Will, but they not unfrequently subdue them to a certain point, letting them run in certain directions and not in others ; or repressing them to a certain degree, and permitting them to rage below that degree.

An instance will help to illustrate what we mean. The author of the Recollections of Mirabeau gives an account of a quarrel which took place between Mirabeau and Claviere, two names which must be familiar to all who are acquainted with the events of the French Revolution.—“A singular circumstance, which struck me very forcibly, had called this quarrel to my recollection. Mirabeau and Claviere, although beside themselves with rage, maintained, with regard to each other’s characters, a discretion which surprised me. I trembled every moment lest Claviere should utter some taunts regarding Mirabeau’s private conduct, and tax him with meanness in pecuniary matters. But, although he had frequently mentioned such things to me, he was too much master of himself to utter them now ; while Mirabeau, on the other hand, foaming with pride and anger, had still the address to mingle with his invectives testimonies of esteem, and compliments upon Claviere’s talents. Thus they scratched and caressed each other with the same hand.”—The same writer makes another statement in regard to Mirabeau which is applicable here. “In the tribune he was

immoveable. They who have seen him well know that no agitation in the assembly had the least effect upon him, and that he remained master of his temper even under the severest personal attacks. I once recollect to have heard him make a report upon the city of Marseilles. Each sentence was interrupted from the *cote droit* with low abuse ; the words calumniator, liar, assassin, and rascal, were very prodigally lavished upon him. On a sudden he stopped, and with a honeyed accent, as if what he had stated had been most favourably received, ‘I am waiting, gentlemen,’ said he, ‘until the fine compliments you are paying me are exhausted.’”\*

§ 215. *Illustrated from the prosecution of some general plan.*

We find further illustration and proof of that energy which is appropriate to the Will, in instances where individuals adopt and pursue, for a length of time, some general plan. Not unfrequently they fix upon an object, which involves either their interest or their duty, and prosecute it with a perseverance and resolution which is truly astonishing. Nor is this state of things limited to those who have been elevated by rank, or have had the advantages of learning. It is often the case, that we see this fixedness of purpose, this unalterable resolution, among those who have been greatly depressed by poverty, and who are ignorant as well as poor.

\* NOTE.—The reader will find an interesting statement, illustrative of this view of the subject, in Count Segur’s History of the Expedition to Russia, book ix , ch. vi. It is an account of an interview between Napoleon and the German general Winzingerode. On the part of Napoleon the interview was violent and angry. But Segur very correctly remarks, “*there was calculation even in his wrath.*”

Some years since, a poor Irish girl came over to this country from Queen's county, in Ireland, for the purpose of making some provision, and obtaining a situation of greater comfort, for her depressed and suffering family. Alone and unprotected, she left the home of her father with only ten dollars in money; travelled on foot about fifty miles to the city of Dublin; succeeded in obtaining a passage on board a vessel bound for Quebec, and ultimately found her way into the United States. She there pursued her object through long-continued trial and suffering, until the smiles of a kind Providence rewarded her filial piety, and furnished the means which soon brought to her arms the beloved family she had left behind. Now here is a case in common life, without any artificial aids and excitement which can be supposed to have sustained it; and if we could open and expose to the view of the world the records of the suffering and virtuous poor, we should undoubtedly find many like it. "In the obscurity of retirement," says the author of *Laccon*, "amid the squalid poverty and revolting privations of a cottage, it has often been my lot to witness scenes of magnanimity and self-denial, as much beyond the belief as the practice of the great; a heroism borrowing no support, either from the gaze of the many or the admiration of the few, yet flourishing amid ruins and on the confines of the grave; a spectacle as stupendous in the moral world, as the Falls of Niagara in the natural." And can we explain this greatness of soul, this fixedness of purpose, this indomitable resolution, which is displayed in every condition of society, in humble as well as in elevated life, consistently with the supposition that the Will has no power?

But there are other facts of a higher character and a

more general interest, as they involve the welfare, not only of individuals and families, but of whole classes of men. They are too numerous to be mentioned here; but they are recorded, and will long continue to be so, in the faithful register of grateful hearts. Are there not many individuals, who, like the benevolent Clarkson, have fixed upon some plan of good-will to men, embracing a great variety and degree of effort, and have pursued it amid every form of trial and opposition for years and tens of years? The individual just referred to proposed the simple object of the Abolition of the Slave Trade. To this one object he consecrated his life and all his powers. He permitted no opposition to divert him from his purpose. But amid great apathy of the public mind, and great opposition on the part of those who were personally interested in his defeat; amid the most arduous labours, attended with a thousand discouragements, and protracted for many years; in rebuke, and sickness, and sorrow, this one object was the star that guided him on, the light that sustained him, and which he followed without giving way to his trials or relaxing in the least from his efforts until it was secured.

214. *The subject illustrated from the course of the first settlers of New-England.*

The course of the first settlers of New-England is an instance favourable for the illustration of the subject before us. Their simple object was to find a residence somewhere where they could live in the full and free exercise and enjoyment of their religion. And this was an object which, under the circumstances of the case, was not to be carried into effect without great firmness

and perseverance. They left behind them, in their native country, a thousand objects which the world holds most dear. Despised and outcast, they came to these inhospitable shores in sorrow, and weakness, and poverty. They suffered from the want of provisions, from the prevalence of wasting sickness, from the storms and cold of winter, and from the watchful jealousy and hostility of the savage tribes. Though sincerely and ardently religious, it cannot be denied that they had their seasons of discouragement; and often feared and often doubted. But when all without was darkness, and when even the inward lights burned dimly, the high purpose which they had once deliberately and prayerfully formed remained unchanged. They held on by the anchor of a determined RESOLVE. So that it can be said with almost strict truth, that the Will sustained them when the Heart was broken.

§ 215. *Illustrated by the fortitude exhibited by Savages.*

We might go on multiplying illustrations of this subject almost without number; drawn, too, from every class of men, and from every condition of society, savage as well as civilized. We have often thought that the life of the savage warrior furnished an interesting philosophical problem. Let the reader go with us a moment to yonder dark and boundless forest. Behold beneath the light of the uncertain and shuddering moon, the fire kindled which is destined to consume the victim taken in war. View him fastened to the stake, his flesh slowly consumed, and, as it is burning, torn piecemeal from his blackened bones. What inexpressible suffering! And yet this dark son of the forest, this poor ignorant child of

nature, betrays no weakness of purpose, sheds no tear, utters no exclamation of impatience. His enemies can take from him his distant wigwam, his wife and children, his burning body, his expiring life ; but the sudden death-song, rising loudly and triumphantly, is a proof that they have not taken, nor are they able to take from him, the firm resolve, the unconquerable Will.

Here are the facts which are presented before us ; not all, indeed, which can be brought forward, and perhaps they are not those which are best adapted to our purpose. But, such as they are, they are undeniable. They are inscribed on every page of the history of the human race. And we may challenge philosophy or anything else satisfactorily to explain them, except on the ground of the innate energy, not merely of the mind as a whole, but of the voluntary faculty in particular.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### SELF-DETERMINING POWER OF THE WILL.

##### *§ 216. General remarks on a self-determining power.*

BUT admitting all that has been said, and freely granting that there is a true and substantive power in the Will, the inquiry may still remain, what is the nature of this power ? On this particular topic we take the liberty to refer the reader to the remarks which have already been made on the nature of POWER, considered as applicable to, and as an attribute of, the mind in general. Those remarks are not less applicable to the parts of the mind

than they are to the mind considered as a whole. They do not appear, however, to reach one question, which has been the subject of much inquiry and interest, viz., *the self-determining power of the Will*, as it is termed. This question, therefore, is entitled to a brief notice.

§ 217. *Of a self-determining power of the mind.*

In endeavouring to answer the inquiry, whether the Will has a self-determining power, we remark, in the first place, that we must attend carefully to the import of the terms. If, for instance, by the self-determining power of the Will be meant the self-determining power of the MIND, considered as a whole, we may grant that there is such a power under the circumstances in which we actually exist. Under these circumstances, it is the natural result that the understanding or intellect should be more or less developed. Thought is obviously incidental to the nature of the mind, when objects of thought are brought within its reach. And as, in the circumstances in which we are placed, such objects exist all around it, the intellect or understanding always makes them the subject of examination and knowledge; and, we may add, what is the important circumstance here, that it makes them the subject of knowledge by *its own power*.

Furthermore, the mind is so constituted, that the development of the Intellect is always followed by the expansions and exercise, in a greater or less degree, of the SENSIBILITIES; that is to say, of the desires, emotions, and feelings of moral obligation. And in this state of things we have an adequate and ample basis for the action of the Will. In this way, and in this natural order of things, the whole mind is brought into action. So that we may undoubt-

edly admit, and may assert with entire truth, that the mind, under the circumstances in which we are placed, possesses what may be called (although there is certainly no peculiar felicity in the expression) a self-determining power. In other words, it perceives, and it feels, and it wills *of itself*. In each case, viz., in perception, in the various forms of feeling, and in volition, there is power, subject, however, as we should always keep in mind, to *conditions*. Having the power to will, it wills, because it feels; having the power to feel, it feels, because it perceives; and having the power to perceive, it perceives, because objects of perception are involved in the circumstances in which it is placed. Under these circumstances, therefore, the mind acts of itself or has a self-determining power. Or, what is the same thing, its exercises, although they are in their origin subject to some conditions, are its own exercises.

§ 218. *Of the objective or outward sphere of the mind's activity.*

It may perhaps be suggested here, in connexion with what has just been said, that the sphere of the mind's freedom encircles that of the Will; and that the greater sphere, viz., of the mind, is encircled and circumscribed by the objects which are presented to it. And that in this way both the general mental freedom and the subordinate voluntary freedom are obstructed.—In connexion with this suggestion, we remark, FIRST. The objects which are presented to the human mind, and which furnish the objective or outward basis of its activity and self-determination, are numberless. The human intellect has hardly strength enough to sustain the mere con-

temptation of them. SECOND. The mind views these objects in a great variety of aspects. And every aspect is, relatively to the mind's operations, a *new* object. And thus the objects, which were originally numberless, are indefinitely multiplied. THIRD. Besides the objects and the aspects in which they present themselves, in themselves considered, there are also a multitude of NATURAL relations, which very much exceed in number the original objects. FOURTH. All these objects and aspects of objects and natural relations may be contemplated in the light of the moral vision. In other words, we may have a knowledge of moral as well as natural relations.

It would seem that we have here a basis for the mental activity, and through the mediation of the other parts of the mind, for the activity and freedom of the Will, sufficiently extensive to satisfy any reasonable views of the subject. The basis of mental freedom, considered in this point of view, presents itself in the aspect of a great and wide sea, which, to the utmost *human* vision, has no bounds, no shore.

### *§ 219. Of a self-determining power of the will.*

In the second place, if, by the phrase 'self-determining power of the Will,' be merely meant that the Will itself, that distinct susceptibility of the mind which we thus denominate, has POWER OF ACTION, we grant that it is so.— We have already seen that the mind, considered as a whole, has power. In this sense, as well as in others, the mind is created in the image of God. And wherever else that power may be lodged, it has its residence peculiarly in the mental susceptibility which we denominate the Will. That the Will, therefore, in connexion

with the multitude of objects that are presented before it, and under the conditions which its Maker has assigned to it, possesses the capability of movement or action ; in other words, that it does or ITSELF act, arbitrate, determine, or decide in the circumstances appropriate to its action, we do not deny ; but, on the contrary, admit and affirm it to be so.

Perhaps, however, a question of this kind will arise here. Has the Will, having arbitrated or decided in a given case, the power to decide *differently*, all the circumstances under which the present decision is made remaining the same ? We answer, FIRST. If this question is to be decided at all, it must, as it seems to us, be decided on the ground of Consciousness. But the testimony of Consciousness, as is generally agreed among mental philosophers, reaches only to mental acts, and to the actual varieties and modifications, such as the actually existing freedom and power, of those acts ; and not to what is merely conjectural, or, in other words, to supposed possibilities. We do not, therefore, clearly see how the proposed question can, on philosophical grounds, be satisfactorily decided.—And not only this. In order to illustrate the subject, we will make a supposition. We will suppose that the Will, in a given case, decides in entire accordance both with the desires and feelings of obligation, which is not unfrequently the fact. In other words, it decides in accordance with all the motives which, in the present constitution of the mind, can possibly be presented to it. Then the perplexing question arises, What is the ground or basis of the supposed opposite decision ? Is the conjectural opposite decision to be regarded as a decision without cause, without reason, without motive ?

SECOND. The inquiry under consideration appears to

be practically of but little importance. The great matter for us to know is, that the Will acts, and that it truly acts with such freedom and such power as to lay the basis of accountability. And knowing this, (and certainly we are able to know this without overstepping the limits of an acknowledged and sound philosophy,) it does not appear to be necessary to go further, even if it were possible.

§ 220. *Of such a self-determining power of the will as involves the dependence of the present volition on a former one.*

There is still another view of the subject. If, (as is sometimes understood by those expressions,) by the phrase self-determining power of the Will, is meant a power, in virtue of which the Will acts in order to determine its own action, then we may confidently assert, that the proposition which alleges the existence of such self-determining power, involves what is obviously contradictory and absurd. The reader is requested to notice the manner in which the terms in question are understood by us in the remarks which are now to be made. We understand the only remaining meaning of the phrase, self-determining power of the Will, to be this, viz., that, in virtue of the Will's power, every volition is preceded by another well-defined act of the will, and in such a way that such volition could not have existed without the preceding act; in other words, that the will, in the *exercise* or by the *action* of its self-determining power, causes or brings to pass the voluntary state of the mind or volition; a form of expression which evidently and necessarily implies an act of the will *antecedent* to volition.—This doctrine, so far as we are able to form a judgment of it,

seems to be in itself exceedingly absurd and even inconceivable.

- If every volition is based upon a preceding act of the will as the condition of its existence, may we not with propriety and with pertinence ask, what causes this preceding act? And we must be told again, (for we know of no other possible answer,) it is the Will's self-determining power; an explanation which obviously implies an act existing anterior to the before-mentioned antecedent act. And thus, on this system, we should be obliged to go on from one step to another, from the volition which is the immediate antecedent of the outward action to another volition which is the antecedent and the cause of that, and then again to another still antecedent volition; and so on without end. A self-determining power, therefore, in the sense which we now suppose to be contended for, implies a perpetual going round and round, a movement in a circle without any end. So far from giving power to the Will in any special and extraordinary sense, the doctrine in question deprives it of all power; it makes it a mere automaton, with a mechanism indeed, capable of generating a series of perpetual motions; but which motions have no perceptible, nor even conceivable beginning or termination.

#### § 221. *Opinions of President Edwards on this subject.*

Upon this particular view of the subject now before us, we take the liberty of appealing to the statements of President Edwards; and we do not know that anything can profitably be added to what he has said. We have already, in the preceding section, given the substance of some of his remarks, but the reader is entitled to his own

words. “If the will determines the will, then choice orders and determines the choice ; and acts of choice are subject to the decision, and follow the conduct of other acts of choice. And, therefore, if the will determines all its own free acts, then every free act of choice is determined by a preceding act of choice choosing that act. And if that preceding act of the will or choice be also a free act, then, by these principles, in this act too, the will is self-determined : that is, this, in like manner, is an act that the soul voluntarily chooses ; or, which is the same thing, it is an act determined still by a preceding act of the will, choosing that. And the like may again be observed of the last-mentioned act. Which brings us directly to a contradiction : for it supposes an act of the will preceding the first act in the whole train, directing and determining the rest ; or a free act of the will before the first free act of the will.”\*

## CHAPTER IV.

### DIFFERENCES OF VOLUNTARY POWER.

#### § 222. *Differences in voluntary power seldom noticed.*

THERE is one aspect in which this subject remains to be contemplated, which may tend to throw some light on what has already been stated under the general head of Power of the Will ; we refer to DIFFERENCES OF VOLUNTARY POWER. This is a view of the human mind which has seldom, owing perhaps to erroneous or indistinct

\* Edwards’s Inquiry into the Will, part ii., § 1.

views on the whole subject of mental power, received that attention to which it appears to be entitled. It is no uncommon thing to hear remarks made upon differences of strength in the passions of men, or in their faculties of perception and reasoning, but it is exceedingly seldom that we notice anything said in explanation of differences in the capability of the Will. But if there is truly a power, an original and substantive efficiency, lodged in the Will, it is certainly a natural presumption that we should find degrees and diversities in this power, not less than in any other ability of the mind. And facts which are constantly presented to our notice show this to be the case.

### § 223. *Remarks on constitutional weakness of the will.*

If we will take the trouble to examine the characters of men, as we find them developed more or less in the pursuits of life, we shall not fail to find some who exhibit, not occasionally merely, but as a general thing and as a permanent trait of mind, a feebleness of resolution, a sort of vacillancy, a continual oscillation, if one may be allowed the expression, between one thing and another. No arguments, no motives, no considerations of interest, duty, or glory, are able permanently to countervail and prop up this inherent weakness. They may indeed sustain it for a time; the imbecility of purpose which marks the history of these persons may not always be discoverable in the ordinary circumstances of life, especially when the Will is supported by considerations suitable to give it strength; but in the onset of perilous circumstances, in the close pressure of portentous danger, in sudden and fearful emergencies of any kind whatever,

instead of standing erect and immoveable, they are overwhelmed and driven away, "like the heath in the desert." And if this statement is correct, it certainly presents an important aspect in the developements of human nature.

We do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles; we do not expect the blind to see, the lame to walk erect, or the deaf to hear; we do not feel at liberty to require of a man, whose intellect is obviously incompetent to the task of combining more than half a dozen propositions, the production of a Spirit of Laws, a Principia, or Mechanique Celeste; and it would be almost as unreasonable, however useful they may be in other situations more adapted to their peculiarities of mental organization, to expect from such persons a course of perseverance, fortitude, and daring. If no one is answerable for a greater number of talents than are given him, and if, in the case of particular individuals, the Almighty Dispenser of mental gifts has seen fit to assign those talents to the Intellect rather than the Will, the requisition should be made, not only in conformity with the amount which has been given, but with reference also to the place of deposite. We may impose upon such persons a heavy burden of thought; but must be less exorbitant in our requisitions on their resolves and action in those difficult and pressing emergencies, which obviously require the interposition of men of a different stamp.

#### § 224. *Of comparative or relative weakness of the will.*

There is an apparent, and, to all practical purposes, an actual weakness of the will, which, when we fully consider its nature, may properly be termed COMPARATIVE OR RELATIVE. We may explain it thus. The individual is not

wanting in voluntary decision and energy, if the Will be considered *in itself* and disconnected from other parts of the mental constitution. So far from this, it may perhaps be said with truth, that voluntary energy is naturally a leading trait and characteristic of the persons now referred to. And yet the Will does not fully perform the office of a controlling power; it does not act up to the standard of its own capabilities; the individual is often vacillating in his conduct, even in those cases where he acts with vigour; so much so, that, even with great confidence in his good intentions, we do not place full reliance on his future conduct. And the cause is to be attributed not so much, as has been remarked, to any weakness in the will, *in itself considered*, as to the want of proportion between that and other parts of the mind. In other words, the passions have become predominant; an inflammatory violence has been infused into them by nature or by accidental circumstances; and the Will, whatever may have been its original vigour, has become subordinate in its influence.—Have we not an illustration of these statements in the life of the Scottish poet Burns? It is undeniable, that he naturally possessed more vigour of purpose, more energy of resolve, than many other persons; but such was the inordinate intensity of his passions, that the power of his Will was *relatively* weak; it could not withstand and control those internal tempests to which he was subject.

#### § 225. *Instances of want of energy of the will.*

Having made these general statements concerning weakness or inefficiency of the Will, (both that which is original or natural, and that which is relative and de-

pends upon the inordinate strength of some parts of our sentient or emotive nature,) we now proceed to give some further instances of that want of voluntary energy which has been spoken of. Do we not often discover a defect of this kind in men in public life ? How many instances are recorded in history of men who have been thrown upon the stormy ocean of politics, fitted with every capability for such a situation, with the exception of voluntary energy ; but who, burdened with this single defect, have at last gone down and been overwhelmed in the billows ! Was not the pre-eminent mind of Cicero, capable as it was of penetrating all the mazes of philosophy, and of embracing all the heights and depths of civil and public law, greatly wanting in decision, in energy, in the firm and unshaken resolve ? Although unspeakably in the advance in other respects, would it not in this particular suffer in comparison with the energetic purpose of Brutus and the Cæsars ?—There is a name of no small note in English history, which is naturally brought to recollection in connexion with these views, as an instance of versatility, founded not so much upon incapacity of the understanding as upon imbecility and changeableness of the will. We refer to the Duke of Buckingham, who figured so conspicuously in the reign of Charles II., and who, in the language of Dryden,

“ Was everything by starts, and nothing long ;  
But, in the course of one revolving moon,  
Was chymist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon.”

Some of the prominent leaders in the French Revolution, that remarkable period of political tempest, showed themselves unequal to the occasion, and were overwhelmed in the convulsions which they contributed to arouse, but were unable to control. Were not the ministers

G e

Necker and Roland, whose relations to that memorable event are too well known to require a recital, instances and proofs of this remark? Of Claviere also, one of the associates of Roland, it was remarked by Mirabeau, who was intimately acquainted with him, that “he was a man in head *and a child in heart*; that he always wanted a regulator; and that, left to himself, he never ceased to vary.” Of De Graves, the successor of Narbonne, and who was required, in consequence of his situation and age, to furnish the list of the Roland ministry, it is said by a writer already repeatedly referred to, that “no man was less qualified to take a part *in a stormy administration*. He was an honest man, and his heart was good; he was a stranger to all party feeling, but was weak both in body and mind; he was not deficient in acquirements, and laboured hard; but he wanted *energy of character, and a firm will of his own.*”\*—The mere possession of intellectual power is not enough to fit a person to take a leading part in the government of a nation; but it is necessary that he should add to distinguished powers of perception and reasoning a corresponding energy of the Will. How many, in consequence of not possessing powers of the Will commensurate with those of the Understanding, have become giddy on the pinnacle of their elevation, and have arisen only to fall!

#### § 226. *Remarks on great strength of the will.*

But there are instances of a different kind from those which have just been mentioned; instances, so far from weakness, that we clearly discover in them remarkable power of the will. It cannot be doubted, that, among

\* Dumont’s Recollections of Mirabeau, chaps. xv., xix.

the various elements which constitute whatever is great and admirable in man, we find one here, viz., in marked decision and vigour of the will. If, in some cases, the will seems hardly to have an existence, in others it exhibits a transcendent degree of energy. There have been men who, in danger and suffering, have shown a vigour that was calculated to excite the strongest emotions ; who have been inflexible, while others have been changed with every varying breeze ; and have possessed themselves in stability and calmness, while many around them have been shaken in their resolutions and disquieted with fears. Of this marked decision and energy of the Will, we now proceed to give some illustrations.

*§ 227. Energy of the will as displayed under bodily suffering.*

When occupied with the general subject of the power of the will, we had occasion to make the remark, that the patience which was not unfrequently exhibited in circumstances of bodily suffering, indicated the existence of such power in a greater or less degree. We might with propriety appeal to instances of the same kind, in order to show with what varieties of intensity the voluntary power is dispensed to different individuals. It is often said, however, when we refer to cases of this kind, that men will calmly endure almost anything when they cannot help it. But, in answer to this suggestion, it is enough to say, that there are cases where men suffer by their own act and their own choice ; and not merely in a slight manner, but in the highest degree.—Plutarch relates an incident in the life of the celebrated Marius, which will tend to show what we mean. This extraordinary man

had both his legs covered with wens, and being troubled with the deformity, he determined to put himself into the hands of a surgeon. Confident in his own energy of mind, he would not be bound, but stretched out one of his legs to the knife; and without a motion or groan, bore the inexpressible pain of the operation in silence and with a settled countenance. The story of Mutius Scaevola also shows us what astonishing powers of will our Maker has seen fit to dispense to some persons. When required by Porsena to explain certain intimations of danger which he had obscurely thrown out, and being threatened with extreme suffering in case of a refusal, he calmly thrust his right hand into a fire which had been kindled for the purpose of a sacrifice, and steadily held it there burning in the flames, for the sole purpose of giving Porsena to understand that he was not a person to be influenced by fear or intimidated by suffering.—Is not this to be regarded as a decisive and remarkable instance of voluntary energy; showing most clearly, that, while power is truly and emphatically appropriate to the Will, it does not exist in all persons in an equal degree, but is conferred more richly on some than on others?

There is a similar instance in the life of Archbishop Cranmer. In an unguarded and unhappy hour he had subscribed to doctrines which he did not believe; an act which he afterward deeply repented of, as the greatest miscarriage of his life. And when he was subsequently led to the stake, he stretched out the hand which had been the instrument in this false and discreditable subscription, and, without betraying, either by his countenance or motions, the least sign of weakness or even of feeling, (such are the very words of the historian,) he held it in the flames till it was entirely consumed.

*§ 228 Energy of the will as shown in imminent danger*

Diversities in the strength and energy of the voluntary faculty are clearly seen in all cases of imminent danger, particularly danger of death. The fear of death is as natural to man as the love of life; and but few men can be suddenly exposed to death, especially if it appear to be inevitable, without experiencing a shrinking back from it. We find some persons, however, who have such energy of purpose, such remarkable decision and firmness, that they meet it, not merely as it comes in the milder arrangements of Providence, but in its most horrid and violent forms, with entire calmness, and even seek it as something desirable. The Roman Decii voluntarily devoted themselves to death for their country. Regulus, when he had been made a prisoner by the Carthaginians, of his own accord took a course, safe and honourable, as he supposed, for Rome; but which he clearly foresaw (and the result even more than realized his anticipations) would be attended with extreme cruelty and destruction to himself. In the dreadful wars of modern times, which have carried sorrow and desolation over Europe and America, how often have we heard of deeds and enterprises of valour, which have excited our admiration in view of the wonderful energy of purpose they have displayed, at the same time that we deeply lamented the occasions that called them forth. In the war of La Vendée, the celebrated Kleber called an officer to him for whom he had a particular esteem and friendship. "Take," said he to his military friend, "a company of grenadiers; stop the enemy before that ravine; you will be killed, but you will save your comrades." "I shall

G e 2

do it, general," replied the officer, with as much calmness as if he had been required to perform a simple military evolution. He fulfilled his word and arrested the enemy's progress, but perished in the achievement.

But it is not the soldier alone who has exhibited this energy of purpose amid the imminent danger of death. Not unfrequently have the philanthropist and the Christian Missionary placed themselves in situations where extreme suffering, and even death itself, seemed to be inevitable. They have not only had the resolution to leave their country and home, but to plunge into dungeons, to walk on their errands of mercy amid pestilential atmospheres, to wander through pathless forests, and over burning sands and precipitous mountains. In the boundless forests of North and South America; on the shores of the Nile and the Ganges, and on the banks of solitary streams unknown to civilized man; in frozen Greenland and the burning sands of Africa; in the distant islands of the sea, amid the wretched hamlets of the dreary Alps, wherever there is ignorance to be enlightened, or sorrow to be soothed, or souls to be saved, their labours of benevolence have been witnessed, and their names will be held in lasting veneration.

#### § 229. *Energy of the will as shown in martyrdoms.*

Diversities in the power of the Will are quickly discovered, not only in the situations just referred to, of exposure to imminent danger, but in all extraordinary and trying situations whatever. Whenever we open a book of war, of famine, of pestilence, or of martyrdoms, and read in it the conduct of men under these terrible inflictions, we open and read a new and most interesting

chapter in the philosophy of the human mind. It is impossible for a person to read the history of Martyrdoms, in particular, without entertaining a deep regard and admiration for the sufferers, founded not merely upon considerations connected with the cause of their sufferings and death, but also upon the moral sublimity of their fixed and immutable resolve. It may indeed be said, and said with truth, that they were supported by religious faith and hope. We may rest assured, nevertheless, that the cases of marked and decisive triumph over bodily suffering were, for the most part, those of persons who possessed an original and innate energy of the Will. It is true that they were enabled to endure a great increase of suffering with the aids of religion; but they were, for the most part, persons who could have firmly and triumphantly endured much suffering without it. It was this combination of original energy of character with the blessed aids of religion, that supported Jerome of Prague, who sung hymns as he went to the place of execution, embraced the stake with cheerfulness, and, when the executioner went behind him to set fire to the fagots, exclaimed, "Come here and kindle it before my eyes; for, had I been afraid of it, I had not come here, having had so many opportunities to escape."

It was this combination of communicated faith and natural energy which has characterized other historical instances; one of which, although it may already be known to the reader, is too interesting to be passed by.—Maccail, one of the Covenant preachers, was subjected in the year 1666 to the torture, which, in reference to the process gone through, is called in Scotland the boots. The torturers place a kind of iron boot close on the leg of the sufferer, and drive wedges between this and the

leg Maccaill, guilty of the crime of preaching Christ, was compelled to undergo this dreadful form of suffering; but, supported by a strong faith and an indomitable will, he remained true to his principles and his cause, although he expired under the process; a man who may be said to be triumphant in the moment of his destruction. His last words, uttered in the very moments of death, and with a distinct and impressive voice, are very remarkable; perhaps, when we consider the peculiar circumstances of the case, a mind in glory and a body in ruins, they are as much so as any words in all history. "Farewell, sun, moon, and stars. Farewell, kindred and friends. Farewell, world and time. Farewell, weak and frail body. Welcome, eternity. Welcome, angels and saints. Welcome, the Saviour of the world. And welcome, God, the judge of all."\*

§ 230. *Subject illustrated from two classes of public speakers.*

In this connexion we are naturally led to make the remark, that there are not only some situations, but some arts and callings in life, in which a high degree of decision and energy of the will is absolutely necessary to success. Among other arts, (we do not propose to mention all of them where this trait seems to be especially requisite,) a high degree of voluntary energy is exceedingly important to that of the orator. And we are here furnished with grounds of distinction and comparison between men of eloquence. There are some public speakers who greatly fail in efficiency of the Will. Possessed of intellectual powers that command the admiration of

\* Bishop Burnet's History of his own Time, Reign of Charles II.

all, they are still acknowledged to have a weak point here. When they arise to speak in public, they have a clear perception of the subject of debate; and if there are any exciting elements in it, their passions are enkindled, and the texture of their argument is rendered heated and radiant with the flame. The strong workings of the sensibilities are seen in the agitated nerves, the violent gesticulation, and the contortions of the muscles. And we might expect great results, were it not that the presiding power of the will, upon which, under such circumstances, everything depends, is not equal to the occasion. The voluntary power staggers upon its throne. They lose the control of themselves; so that the mind, freighted as it is with thought and argument, is violently driven about, like a ship caught in a whirlwind.

But there are other public speakers, who combine a high degree of intellectual ability with a no less signal energy of the Will. On the occasions of public debate, however momentous, they arise with perfect calmness. The class of persons whom we now have in view are not without passion. On the contrary, the passions exist in a decided degree, and are capable of being aroused and of being impregnated with tremendous energy. But under no circumstances do they permit the passions to be so aroused as to reject and annul the supervision and control of the higher power of the will. They at times permit them to operate, so far as may be necessary to infuse vitality and vigour into the intellect; but always hold them, even in their highest exercises, amenable to the effective superintendence of volition. Accordingly, when they consider it as suiting their purpose, they let them loose, and at once their voice and all the other methods of oratorical communication become the indices and exposi-

tors of the tempest that is raging within. If it suits their purpose better, they suddenly call to their aid the supremacy of the voluntary power; all outward agitation ceases; a calm succeeds to the tempest; there is nothing perceptible but quiet dignity and unruffled self-possession; the passions, rebuked and quelled by a higher authority, retire into the secret recesses of the soul:

“Imperio premit, ac vinclis et carcere frænat.”

§ 231. *Power of the will requisite in the military and other arts.*

There are other situations and callings in life, in which power of the will is an essential requisite to success. This is particularly true of the military life, although it is painful even to speak of such an art or calling among men. There never was a great commander who had not great energy of volition. It is not to be supposed, because a man stands unmoved and calm in the day of battle, even in its most terrible onsets, that he is naturally destitute either of fear or of the love of life. If this is sometimes the case, it is certainly not always so. And where such is undoubtedly the fact, it is not to be regarded as evidence of greatness, but rather of obtuseness and hebetude of character. That sort of courage which consists in mere dulness and immobility of feeling, may answer well enough for a common soldier; but the trait of a great commander, in addition to great intellectual power, is energy of the Will, or what we more commonly express by the term *self-command*. He keeps not only his fears, but his hopes also, in subjection; and the imperturbable calmness he discovers is not to be regarded as a proof of the absence of fear, or hope, or joy, or sorrow, or anger.

but merely as an indication that he keeps those emotions and passions under complete control.

Similar remarks will apply to those who are exposed to the dangers and perplexities of a seafaring life; particularly such as are sent out on voyages of exploration and discovery. If a high degree of energy of the Will is essential to the character of men who are required to fill leading military stations, it is not less essential to those who, like Columbus, and De Gama, and Cooke, and La Perouse, are destined to discover and explore new worlds. And hence, when persons are to be selected for such expeditions, the inquiry with their employers always is, not merely is he a man of intellect and of education, but is he a man of decision and firmness? Can he stand unmoved and self-possessed in trying and unexpected situations? Is he able, with entire and manifest coolness, to meet danger, and pain, and even death itself?

#### § 232. *Energy of the will requisite in the men of revolutions.*

A higher degree of voluntary power than is allotted to the great mass of mankind, seems to be requisite in those who are destined to take a leading part in those great moral, religious, and political revolutions which have from time to time agitated the face of the world. It is no easy task to change the opinions of men, to check and subdue vices which have become prevalent, or to give a new aspect and impulse to religion and liberty. The men who take a lead in these movements are, in general, men of decision and firmness; no others would answer the purpose. If the gentle spirit of Melancthon had been placed in the precise position occupied by Luther, would

the great event of the Protestant Reformation have been urged forward with the same impetus and to the same issues?—When society becomes greatly unsettled, either in its religious or political aspects; when there is a heaving and tossing to and fro; a removal of the old landmarks, and a breaking up of the old foundations, then it is that men, not merely of intellect, but of decision and energy, (sagacious, cool, decided, persevering, resolute,) find their way upward to the summit of the conflicting elements, and subject them to their guidance. Such is the natural course of things; such men are needed, and no others are capable of taking their place; and they become, almost of necessity, the advisers and leaders in the nascent order of society. The prominent leaders, therefore, in every great religious or political revolution, will be found to illustrate the fact, that there are original and marked differences in the degree of power which is appropriate to the will. Look at the men who presided at the events of the great English Revolution of 1640, particularly the Puritans; men of the stamp of the Vanes, Hampdens, and Fleetwoods; who, in embarking in the convulsions of that stormy period, had a twofold object in view, the security of political liberty and the attainment of religious freedom! Were they weak men? Were they men wanting in fortitude? Were they uncertain and flexible, vacillating and double-minded? History gives an emphatic answer to these questions. It informs us that they entered into the contest for the great objects just now referred to, with a resolution which nothing could shake, with an immutability of purpose resembling the decrees of unalterable destiny. They struck for liberty and religion, and they struck not *thrice* merely, but as the prophet of old would have had them; smiting

*many times*, and smiting fiercely, till Syria was consumed. They broke in pieces the throne of England ; they trampled under foot her ancient and haughty aristocracy ; they erected the standard of religious liberty, which has waved ever since, and has scattered its healing light over distant lands ; and by their wisdom and energy they not only overthrew the enemies of freedom at home, but made the name of their country honoured and terrible throughout the earth. They seem to have entirely subjected their passions to their purposes, and to have pressed all the exciting and inflammable elements of their nature into the service of their fixed and immutable wills. In the prosecution of their memorable achievements,

“ Of which all Europe talk’d from side to side,”

they acted under the twofold pressure of motives drawn from heaven and earth ; they felt as if they were contending for principles which were valuable to all mankind, and as if all mankind were witnesses of the contest ; at the same time that they beheld on every side, in the quickened eye of their faith, the attendant angels eagerly bending over them, who were soon to transfer to the imperishable records on high the story of their victory and reward, or of their defeat and degradation. All these things imparted additional fixedness and intensity to their purposes. “ Death had lost its terrors, and pleasure its charms. They had their smiles and their tears, their raptures and their sorrows, but not for the things of this world. Enthusiasm had made them Stoicks, had cleared their minds from every vulgar passion and prejudice, and raised them above the influence of danger and corruption. It sometimes might lead them to pursue unwise ends, but never to choose unwise means. They

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went through the world like Sir Artegale's man Talus with his flail, crushing and trampling down oppressors, mingling with human beings, but having neither part nor lot in human infirmities ; insensible to fatigue, to pleasure, and to pain ; not to be pierced by any weapon, not to be withstood by any barrier.”\*

§ 233. *Practical application of these views.*

The statements and reasonings of this and the preceding chapters in this Part of the Treatise, seem to us satisfactorily to show, that POWER, in the strict and real sense of the term, is an attribute of the mind as a whole ; that it is truly an attribute of the Will also ; and that, as an attribute of the Will, it exists in different degrees in different individuals. And it is proper to add here, that these views admit of a practical application, from which no person whatever ought to consider himself exempt. We are too apt to estimate and limit the degree of our accountability by the amount of our *intellectual* powers. But it cannot be doubted, that this is a ground of estimate too restricted. We are to inquire also, whether our Maker has not seen fit to give us a large share of natural fortitude and decision ? Whether he has not endued us with powers of the Will, which, under a suitable direction, might be available for our own good and that of others ? And if we find it to be so, we may be assured that somewhere within the sphere of our location and action in life, there are duties which require this precise kind of talents, for the performance of which they were undoubtedly given. Let us, then, study ourselves, and learn what our adorable Maker would have us to do.

\* Edinburgh Review, August, 1825, Art. Milton.

## CHAPTER V.

## CONSISTENCY OF CHARACTER.

§ 234. *Connexion of the philosophy of the will with consistency of character.*

THE philosophical analysis of the Will, which we have now in a great degree completed, may contribute to various practical results, some of them of no small value. Among other things, we may confidently assert, that we find in the nature and operations of the Will the basis of CONSISTENCY OF CHARACTER, which is certainly one of the most interesting as well as important traits. There is a well-written and popular Essay of Mr. Foster upon Decision of Character; a subject, although it is intimately connected with the doctrine of the will, on which we do not propose to touch except incidentally. We refer to that Essay, which exhausts in a great degree the subject of Decision of Character, merely for the purpose of saying, if indeed it can be necessary to suggest a caution of that kind, that it is important not to confound consistency with mere decision; for, although they approximate and resemble in some respects, they are obviously remote from each other and different in other respects. Decision is more limited; consistency embraces a wider range of operations. Decision relates to one thing, or, at least, may be shown clearly and distinctly in one thing; consistency relates to many. The appropriate sphere of decision of character is found in some perplexing but

definite emergency, and, of course, it generally manifests itself in the performance of particular acts. Consistency, on the contrary, can never be shown from the course taken in a particular emergency, without taking into consideration the conduct of the person in other situations; but develops and proves itself from the tenour of his conduct in a long series of events. Decision implies a condensed and inspirited energy put forth in the crisis of a day or an hour; consistency implies a condensation, and, if we may be allowed the expression, a *tension* of purpose, kept firm and immoveable for years, and even a whole life.

There are some men who may not altogether be wanting in decision, but who exhibit a species of mental restlessness, an uncertainty of regard and affection, an inequality of temper, and an inconstancy of conduct, which seems to be inconsistent with the just claims of a percipient and moral nature. If we do not err in our estimate of the capabilities of human nature, it is in the power of all, who are in the full possession of their faculties, to check this inordinate restlessness, to regulate in a great degree this inequality, to establish and to render certain this inconstancy and uncertainty; and it is certainly unnecessary to urge the importance of doing it. The man of naturally small intellect renders himself ridiculous, as well as unhappy, by capriciousness and inconstancy; by such a course he hides or destroys the single talent that is given him; while the man who possesses originality and vigour of intellect, and who might make them of great account for the good of his fellow-men, loses for the same reason the confidence which would be otherwise reposed in him, and becomes comparatively useless.

*§ 235. Illustrations of the inconsistent character.*

We shall perhaps obtain a more full and precise idea of consistency of character, if we look at the person who is without it. The inconsistent man projects a plan of operations to-day ; to-morrow he makes preparations to carry it into effect ; and the next day he abandons it. He proclaims his friendship for this or that individual ; eulogizes their merits, without much discrimination, on every opportunity suitable or unsuitable ; but suddenly he becomes suspicious, recalls his eulogiums, and ends in hatred. He adopts the principles of some literary, political, or religious sect ; defends them with great zeal for a short time ; and then rejects them with contempt. And it is impossible, from any assertions he may make or any course he may pursue at the present moment, to divine what doctrines he will maintain or what course he will take hereafter. In the language of Bruyère, “a man unequal in his temper is several men in one ; he multiplies himself as often as he changes his taste and manners ; he is not this minute what he was the last, and will not be the next what he is now ; he is his own successor ; ask not of what complexion he is, but what are his complexions ; nor of what humour, but how many sorts of humours has he. Are you not deceived ? Is it *Eutichrates* whom you meet ? How cold he is to-day ! Yesterday he sought you, and caressed you, and made his friends jealous of you. Does he remember you ? Tell him your name.”

H H 2

*§ 236. Illustrations of the consistent character.*

The consistent man is directly the reverse. He may be less prompt and rapid in his movements, but he ordinarily exhibits more discretion. And when he has once come to a conclusion as to what course is best to be pursued, he goes forward to the accomplishment of his object with perseverance and success. He may be somewhat cautious in forming friendships; but he is equally so in breaking them up and terminating them. He endeavours to perform what he considers to be his duty after a full examination of a subject, and is not discouraged, and angry, and turbulent, if he happens to meet with disappointments. He looks calmly on the changes of life, neither much elated by prosperity, nor depressed by adversity. He does not make his principles bend to his circumstances; but conscientiously and firmly maintains them under all changes of fortune. If he is poor in outward wealth, he is rich in inward consolation; if he is sometimes filled with sorrow, he is not harassed with the tenfold wretchedness of remorse; and if he is destitute and unhonoured, he is never contemptible.—Such is the consistent man when guided by the sentiments of virtue. Such, among other illustrious names abounding both in profane and sacred history, was Socrates. It was his consistency of character which shed such a lustre over the name and life of that wisest of the sons of Athens.

Other men may have possessed equal talents and have been equally conspicuous; but they had not the same consistency; a consistency the more remarkable, as it was sustained not only against outward pressures, but against no small share of inward evils. It is this trait in particular

which has rendered the ethical teacher of the ancients so pre-eminently entitled to the rank which he holds. In almost every possible situation that could test his principles or try his patience, he was unaltered. He retained the same high principles of virtue, the same meekness, and kindness, and cheerfulness, the same unfeigned disposition to promote the good of his country and of all mankind, amid great poverty, amid ingratitude, and rebuke, and calumny, in prison, and in death itself. Had he decidedly failed in a single position, had he subjected his principles to some temporary convenience even for one short hour, it would have tarnished forever the glory of his good name.

§ 237. *Of individuals remarkable for consistency of character.*

And if we come down to our own times and our own country, is it not the same ? What is it that imparts its deathless splendour to the name of Washington ? It is the same consistency of character. In that well-balanced and noble mind, each desire and passion was compelled to keep its place. He never allowed them to usurp an undue dominion, and to drag his Will hither and thither against the dictates of his Conscience. He had but one rule of conduct, that of an enlightened moral sense. Hence his life was not, at different periods, at variance with, and dissevered from, itself ; but was one throughout, constituting from beginning to end, (at least as compared with that of the great mass of mankind,) a resplendent and unchangeable unity of excellence.

We have often thought that the life of Lafayette, the friend and associate of Washington, was an interesting

illustration of this subject. Having seen in his youth the miseries of a government which is not based on just fundamental laws, he naturally felt a sympathy for those, wherever they might be, who were struggling for liberty. It was not, however, the licentiousness of a mob which had any charms for him ; but freedom controlled by law, the union of liberty and order. The promotion of these was always the great object of his life, steadily and openly pursued in almost every possible variety of trying situation. At one time the idol of the populace, at another doomed by them to the scaffold ; at one time the prominent and leading man of his nation, and soon after a detested fugitive and exile ; to-day the admired inmate of palaces, tomorrow the resident of a dungeon ; in poverty and in wealth, in joy and in sorrow, in honour and in degradation, under the old monarchy, the republic, the empire, and the constitutional monarchy, in the Old World and the New, in the field of battle and amid the debates of the senate, when everything around him had changed and everything in his own personal situation, he still steadily and cheerfully pursued the same noble object, uniting with delightful harmony the end with the beginning, and identified, more than anything else, by THE UNCHANGEABLE IDENTITY OF HIS PRINCIPLES.

§ 238. *Of the value of consistency in the religious character.*

If consistency gives nearly its whole beauty to the character of men in the political sphere and also in the ordinary transactions of life, it is certainly not less fitted to adorn and to honour in the discharge of the various duties of religion. . Probably no directions in the Holy

Scriptures (not always given in express terms, but often indirectly and by implication) are more frequent than those which require us to possess and exhibit consistency of religious character. This requisition is implied more or less in all those passages which exhort us to labour and not to faint, to bear with patience, not to be soon shaken in mind, and to persevere unto the end. When we lack wisdom, we are directed by an Apostle to "ask in faith, nothing wavering ; for he that *wavereth* is like a wave of the sea, driven by the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord. *A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.*" Again and again, Christians are commanded to watch, to stand fast, to continue grounded and settled in the faith, not to be moved away from the hope of the Gospel, and to hold fast their profession without wavering.

It is melancholy to see how much the conduct of those who would not be thought to be wanting in true Christian feeling, varies with circumstances. The performance of the most plain and obvious duty (for instance, that of prayer) is unwisely and wickedly made to depend upon a thousand contingencies, as some transient doubt or fear, to which all men are subject, some trifling worldly disappointment, some slight affection of the nervous system, a keen and uncomfortable atmosphere, the wind blowing in a particular direction, a bright and beaming sun, or a sky overcast with clouds. Many religious persons decline doing what it is obviously their duty to do, because, as they allege, they are not in the right *frame* ; in other words, because their hearts are not sufficiently quickened and enlivened ; not considering that the laws of God and the requisitions of duty are as much binding upon the will and the moral powers, as upon the desires and

the passions. When the desires and the passions are asleep, or are tending the wrong way, we may still find within us abundant elements of action in the will and the conscience. And just so long as the voluntary power or faculty of the will remains to us, and the moral nature, by pointing out a certain course to be pursued, furnishes a basis or occasion for the action of the will, no excuse of dulness and worldliness of the affections can possibly avail. Men may always be morally bound to do up to the limit of what they *can* do ; and if their feelings (we speak not of the moral feelings, but merely of the desires and affections in themselves considered) do not come up to the standard of their actions, that may be their *sin*, as undoubtedly it is, but not their excuse. Not that we mean to approve, by any means, a cold and heartless performance of religious duties ; but merely to assert, that there are elements in our nature which are sufficient to keep the conduct steady, and which ought to keep it steady, to the pursuit of the great objects of a religious life, amid the fluctuations of feeling to which men are so exposed. A depressed and suffering condition of the physical system may for a time infuse a gloom and darkness into our religious affections ; but so long as our perceptions of truth remain clear, and our moral sensibilities are awake, and the faculty of the will is continued to us, we remain under an obligation, as binding and as urgent as ever, to hold on our way, to trust in God, to press forward towards the mark, to fulfil faithfully every obvious duty, " cast down but not destroyed, faint yet pursuing "

§ 239. *Of the foundation or basis of consistency and inconsistency of character.*

The statements of this chapter thus far go to show what consistency of character is, of what importance it is, and what beauty and interest it throws over the whole life. Now if consistency of character is at once so full of beauty and utility, while the opposite trait of character is in an equal degree remote from both, being as deformed in its aspect as it is detrimental in its results, it is important to inquire into the cause both of the one and the other. And we think it must be obvious, on a very limited reflection, that they are both based upon one and the same mental power, viz., the Will. And it is in consequence of this that we introduce this subject in connexion with the examination of the will.—If the will be decisive and energetic, the conduct will be essentially consistent ; if the will be vacillating and weak, we may naturally expect that the vacillation of the mind will infuse itself into the outward life, and stamp it with inconsistency.

“When I look at the *mind* of Lord Bacon,” says Cecil, “it seems vast, original, penetrating, analogical, beyond all competition. When I look at his *character*, it is wavering, shuffling, mean.”\* That the character, the outward life of Lord Bacon was essentially what it is here represented to be, is true ; but the cause of this meanness, and wavering, and shuffling, is not to be sought for in his intellectual powers, for in that respect he was undoubtedly vast and original, as Cecil represents him, and penetrating and analogical, beyond all competition. The secret is to be detected, not in the structure of his intellect

\* *Remains of Rev. Richard Cecil.—Remarks on Authors.*

or the mere percipient part of his nature, but in the natural weakness of his will, as compared with the intensity of his desires and passions. And so of other cases of marked inconsistency of life. There is probably not one, with the exception to be mentioned in the next section, which does not involve the fact of a constitutional or a relative weakness of the will.

§ 240. *Of inconsistency of belief in connexion with inconsistency of conduct and character.*

We are aware there is some ground for the remark here, that inconsistency of conduct is not to be ascribed wholly to a defect in the power or the regulation of the will; but is owing, in part at least, to inconsistencies in the power of *belief*. There are some men who are constantly undergoing changes in their speculative views; whose minds, in the strong language of Foster, "are a CARAVANSERA of opinions, entertained a while, and then sent on pilgrimage." These frequent changes will of course be attended with correspondent changes and inconsistencies of conduct. So that undue versatility of conduct is not always to be ascribed to a defect in the regulation of the will; but often to an inordinate facility and changeableness of belief. In connexion with this aspect of human nature, which is undoubtedly one of no small interest, a few remarks are to be made.

In the first place, we admit it to be true and undeniable, that there are some men who have this strange facility of belief, which in its results attaches them successively to opinions and systems diametrically opposite in their import. And, furthermore, we may well suppose that, in some of these cases, the cause of this peculiarity of mind

is a constitutional and natural one. They labour under the difficulty of a constitutional weakness or defect of mind in this particular. Without checking their belief by the suggestions of the most ordinary degree of caution, without taking any note of dates, characters, and circumstances, they eagerly receive and digest the most glaring and ridiculous improbabilities. In respect to these persons, we may admit, that their inconsistency of conduct is not to be *ultimately* ascribed to a defect in the exercise of the will.

But, in the second place, we shall find in many, and perhaps a majority of cases of great vacillancy and changes in the belief, that the ground or cause of such multiplied changes is not a constitutional imbecility of the belief itself, but is to be sought for in the *will*, and in that very trait or characteristic of the will which is the basis of such inconsistencies in other respects. That is to say : the change in the position of the mind, which is undergone, commences in the will, and the belief is afterward brought to correspond to the new direction which has been taken by the voluntary power. A man, for instance, who is wanting in firmness of purpose, is urgently addressed by another person of a different party or creed. Placed in this situation, he feels the little voluntary strength which he possesses beginning to break up or give way ; and very soon, as if he were a helpless victim wholly in the power of another, he is carried over to the new party or creed, and deserts both his old doctrines and his old friends. He is not convinced nor satisfied ; on the contrary, he feels himself greatly dishonoured ; but as he soon finds he cannot retreat, but must remain in his new position, whether he is pleased with it or not, he sets about searching for arguments to justify

him in the course he has taken. A thousand influences are now at work which were dormant before ; his reputation, his interests, his pride, all throw their weight in favour of certain decisions of the understanding at variance with its former conclusions ; and by this rapid and powerful process, so evidently unfavourable to a true view of a subject, his intellect is soon brought up into a line with the new position of his will ; and he stands justified in his own estimation as a consistent person, though it may be in nobody's else. So that it still remains good, as a general statement, that the basis of consistency or the opposite is to be sought for in the character and discipline of the will.

§ 241. *Self-possession an element of consistency of character.*

But it will be seen more distinctly and fully, that consistency of character has its basis chiefly in the condition and discipline of the will, when we consider some of those things which are more or less implied or embraced in such consistency. It is beyond all question, that one and a marked element in consistency of character is self-possession or self-government. A consistent person has, of course, some fixed principles by which his conduct is regulated, and some great objects before him (or, at least, what he considers such) towards which his efforts tend. His consistency is chiefly exhibited by his acting upon these principles and steadily pursuing these objects. But not unfrequently there are circumstances occurring which come unexpectedly, and which, coming in this unexpected manner, greatly try the strength of his resolutions. If he has not an entire *self-possession* ; if he cannot wholly

control himself in such seasons of sudden temptation and trial, he is, of course, liable to be driven off from the ground of his principles, as well as diverted from the great object of his pursuit, and thus to forfeit his character for consistency. It is highly important, therefore, if we would possess the rich reward and the high honour of a consistent course through life, that the business, and events, and trials of our present state, instead of driving us hither and thither, and exercising an arbitrary sway over us, should be made subject to ourselves ; that our own minds should have the mastery, the pre-eminence, the control over events. But this ability of remaining firm and self-possessed in all such emergencies, implies more or less of power and discipline of the will. And if consistency of character is a truly valuable trait, which gives beauty while it increases the worth of all other traits and attainments, we have a reason here, and a powerful one too, why we should endeavour to understand the nature of the will, and the means of strengthening and regulating it.

§ 242. *Consistency implies perseverance under changes of circumstances.*

As consistency of character involves the fact of a series of actions, extending over a greater or less length of time, there is necessarily implied, as another element in such a character, a disposition to *persevere* in the course which has been once adopted, under all those various changes of circumstances which are found always to attend the progress of human affairs. But there is a great difference in this respect. When the truly consistent man has once placed before him some object as decidedly worthy of his pursuit, he presses towards it with an inflexible and

ever-advancing step ; he is not frightened at every lion that stands or is supposed to stand in his path ; if difficulties suddenly come in his way, perhaps many in number and rising one above another in magnitude, his courage and resolution swell upward in proportion and pass easily over their summit.—But it is altogether different with the man who does not possess this character for consistency. He does indeed place before him some object to be obtained, and he enters upon the pursuit of a with ardour ; but from the beginning he pursues a zigzag and irregular course, alternately advancing and retreating ; the obstacles he meets with, whether from within or from without, perplex his resolutions, and finally turn him wholly from his purpose.

But what is necessary to that perseverance, without which there can be no consistency of character ? Obviously strength of will ; either a natural strength, or a vigour infused into it by a course of discipline. So that we see in this respect, as well as in others, how closely the important subject of consistency of character is connected with the doctrine of the will.

#### § 243. *Consistency implies a control over the passions.*

Among other things which are implied in consistency of character, is a *control of the passions*. Although this ability may, with some reason, appear to be involved in self-possession or self-government, yet it is worthy of a distinct notice by itself. Frequent and violent ebullitions of passion will necessarily mar and destroy the order and harmony of one's life. It is obviously ordered in Providence, that we are placed in a world where trials constantly beset us ; where griefs, and joys, and tears, and

smiles come mingled together, not merely to render us either sad or happy, but to try, to purify, and to discipline the soul. How beautiful, and even sublime, it is to bear in patience the evils which are our allotment; while we learn in quietude and thankfulness the salutary lessons they impart! It cannot be doubted, that a patient spirit, in the circumstances in which we are placed, is absolutely necessary to that propriety and evenness of deportment which is implied in consistency of character. No one can pursue the regular and even tenour of his way on a path so beset with inequalities as that of human life who is not able to guide and to subdue the storms, whether of anger or impatience, which at times arise in every one's bosom. When, in the Providence of God, we are made the subjects of various sorrows, it is our duty to bear them without murmuring. When we are injured by our enemies and are angry with them, it is still our duty to forgive and to bless them. But how can we possibly do this? In what way can we quell our impatience and subdue our anger, if there be not, distinct from the passions and altogether above them, another and authoritative power, to which they can be compelled to render obedience?

It may perhaps be said, in all these cases, that we are not obliged to throw ourselves on the voluntary power, because we have the power of the conscience, the ability implanted within us, to judge of the right and wrong. But it should be kept in mind, that the act of conscience is merely advisory or consultative; that it merely pronounces a thing to be just or unjust, merely approves or disapproves; and that, without some other power to carry its decisions to their appropriate results, it would be wholly without effect. The whole topic, therefore, of

consistency of character (one of the most practical and interesting that can be presented to our notice) is closely, and even inseparably, connected with the doctrine of the nature, powers, and laws of the Will. This, however, is only one instance of the applications of this great subject; which will be found to weave itself into every variety and aspect of the philosophy of human conduct. So that we may say, in a single word, that it is impossible for us to have a correct understanding of the elements, and operations, and diversities of human nature, in its various aspects, both of feeling and action, without an acquaintance, and a *thorough* acquaintance too, with the nature of the voluntary power.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### DISCIPLINE OF THE WILL.

#### § 244. *Importance of a due discipline of the voluntary power.*

In all the various treatises having relation to mental discipline, that have from time to time issued from the press, while much has been said of the discipline of the memory, the reasoning power, the imagination, &c., but little has been said of the discipline of the affections, and still less of that of the Will. It seems even to have been imagined, that the voluntary power, in consequence perhaps of its acknowledged pre-eminence and control over the other powers, is placed in a sphere so entirely distinct and remote as not to be approached in the way

of discipline. And when we consider what ignorance and misconception of this part of our nature has prevailed, it is not surprising, on the whole, that such a notion, erroneous and prejudicial as it is, should have obtained currency. But if the views hitherto given in the various parts of this treatise be correct, we shall see that the discipline of the will is not an unmeaning proposition, and that it is as important as it is practicable. Of the importance of this discipline it will not be necessary to say much, after what has just been remarked on the subject of CONSISTENCY of character. If a man would sustain himself with any sort of credit amid the storms which blow from every point of the compass ; if he would covet the reputation of possessing any fixedness of belief or of acting on any fixedness of plan, it is certain that he must have within himself a regulative power. And this regulative power, in order to meet and sustain the requisitions that are made upon it, must be strengthened in every possible way.

In these views of the importance of the discipline and culture of the Will, we are happy to find ourselves sustained by the authority of an eminent writer, whose opinions would be entitled to great weight on a matter far less obvious.—“The faculty of the Will requires not only to be directed aright in infant life, but to be fortified and strengthened by a course of exercise and discipline, as much as any faculty whatever. This we may say as physiologists ; but as moralists we may speak a bolder language, and maintain, that it demands the spur and trammels of education even more than all the other faculties put together, since it is designed by nature to be the governing power, and to exercise an absolute sway over

the rest, even over the desire itself, by which, however, it is moved on all ordinary occasions.”\*

§ 245. *A due balance of all the powers the most favourable state of things to the just exercise of the will.*

In this connexion, and as preparatory to what we have further to say in this chapter, we are led to make the remark, that the most favourable occasion for the action of any mental power is to be found in the exact adjustment and harmony of the mental powers generally. When they are all in their natural place, when they are all properly and precisely adjusted in reference to each other, without any of that interference and jarring which always result from a transgression of their natural limits, they may all be expected to act vigorously, because there is nothing in the way of their thus acting ; all obstructions, at least all *extrinsic* obstructions, are removed ; and we may reasonably anticipate, that whatever ability they possess will be put forth to the full extent of its existence, and in the most available and best manner. And, accordingly, we may lay it down as a general principle, that wherever there is perfect harmony in the mind, everything will be right in its action ; every exercise of the mind will be in accordance with the truth of things ; that is to say, it will be just such as it ought to be.

But every careful observer of human nature (saying nothing of the obvious testimony of the Bible) assuredly knows that this is a state of things which, as a general statement at least, does not exist among men. The perfect harmony of mental operation which exists in the Divine Mind, and which is beautifully reflected from the

\* Good’s Medicine, NEUROTICA, ORD. I., Gen. vi

minds of all perfectly holy beings, is not found in man ; certainly not in the natural or unholy man. The parts of the human mind, however wonderfully they may have been arranged in the first instance, and whatever realizations of harmony they are capable of attaining to in the future, exhibit at the present time but too mournful evidence of a dislocated and jarring movement. We do not undertake to explain or to intimate in what way it has happened ; but of the general fact there cannot be the least doubt, that the soul of man, from his childhood upward, so far from always disclosing an exact and harmonious action as it should do, is in its own self a scene of fierce and unremitting conflict ; the flesh striving against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh ; the appetites and passions attempting to enforce their claims against the requisitions and authority of conscience ; the love of the world, in its various forms of enticement and attraction, earnestly and fiercely contesting against the love of God and of heavenly things. And now it should be kept in mind, that all this terrible contest bears directly upon the Will ; and it is too often the case, that this higher and controlling power, this great arbiter of the internal conflict, gives its decision in favour of the appetites and against the moral sentiments, in favour of the world and against Him who made the world and all things therein. But this is a state of things which ought not to be. And it is truly a great practical question, in what way the energies of the will can be strengthened, and directed to their appropriate and rightful issues. It is admitted that we know the right. And the question is, How shall we obtain strength to do it ? How shall we redeem ourselves from our voluntary thraldom, and walk forth in the light of our own conscience and in the smiles of an approving God,

regenerated and free ? The answer to these questions might be expanded over volumes, but such an extended examination is not a part of our plan, and we shall dismiss the subject, practical and interesting as it is, with some general views given in as few words as possible.

*§ 246. Of the culture of the appetites, propensities, and passions, as auxiliary to the discipline of the will.*

Keeping in view the general statement, that an entire harmony of the mental powers is a condition of things the most favourable for the perfect exercise of the Will, we are the more fully prepared to enter into the examination of particulars. We proceed, therefore, to remark, that it is highly important, in the discipline of the will, to keep the appetites, propensities, and passions in due subjection. While it is true that the volitions are capable of operating upon these various desires, and that they can check and subdue them, both by a direct and indirect action, and particularly by a combination of both ; it is likewise not the less true, that these appetitive and affective parts of our nature, if we may be allowed such expressions, are also capable in their turn of operating on the volitions, and that they do thus operate ; although it is not necessary at the present time to enter into any explanation of the precise nature of this reciprocal influence. In other words, there is in the economy of the mind a fixed relation between the two ; between the voluntary power or will on the one hand, and the appetites and affections or passions on the other. Each of them has its place ; each in a perfect state of the mind has its appropriate limits ; each has its nature, its object, and its relations. Hence, in order to illustrate the alleged importance of keeping the de-

sires, in their various forms, under suitable control, as a prerequisite to the proper exercise of the will, it seems to be necessary to present but one view. It is a fact, susceptible of as clear demonstration as subjects of this nature generally admit of, that any appetite or propensity whatever, whether it be the desire of mere sensual pleasures, or of knowledge, wealth, or power, which is indulged for a long time without any restraint, (and the same may be said of any one of the passions or affections,) ultimately acquires the ascendancy, and entirely prostrates, not only the Will, but the whole mind, at its feet. If, therefore, we duly estimate the great object of securing to the will a free, unperplexed, and vigorous action, we shall seriously endeavour, by the use of all those means which have a relation to a result so desirable, to restrain every appetite, propensity, and passion within its due bounds. Whenever they exhibit a disposition to pass the limits which a duly sensitive conscience has prescribed to them, let them be subjected to a rigid supervision and repression. If we permit them to take even one step beyond the sphere which nature has assigned them, we give them a sort of claim on another step and another ; and, what is worse, we give them renewed power to enforce it. It is in their very nature, when they have once transgressed, to insist on repeated and continued transgression ; and it is impossible effectually to evade their clamorous and unjust demands, but by expelling them at once from their position, and bringing them back to the place where they belong.

It remains only to be added, that in the culture of the various forms of desire is to be included, not only the repression of those which are evil ; but the bringing out and strengthening of those which are good. The amia

ble and honourable propensities and passions, together with those of a purely religious kind, are entitled to a position in our sentient constitution of the first and highest rank; but how frequently does it happen that they are expelled from their appropriate place, and are compressed into some obscure nook, by the spreading and strengthening of those of a different character. But it is certainly incumbent on every one, who is desirous of securing the great object of freeness, vigour, and rectitude in the mental operations, to make them the subject of special and long-continued attention, to allure them forth into the light, and in every suitable way to accelerate their expansion and enhance their beauty.

§ 247. *Some instances and proofs of the foregoing statements.*

The subject of the inconsistency of the perfect exercise of the Will, with an undue and unnatural predominance of the appetites and passions, has been particularly introduced to the reader's notice in the chapter on the Slavery of the Will. In that chapter various illustrations and facts were brought forward; and, of course, it is not so necessary at the present time to enter into further illustrations and proofs at much length. A few additional remarks will suffice.

Every one must have observed how destructive to every good resolve and noble effort is the inordinate indulgence of the bodily appetites. When they obtain the ascendancy, as they not unfrequently do, they make the unhappy subject of them an entire slave; obscuring his intellect, blunting his conscience, perplexing and overthrowing all his serious and wise determinations, and debasing

him to a level but little short of that of the brutes. The unhappy results of such indulgences are so frequently witnessed, that we feel at liberty to pass them by with this mere reference.—But the evil does not rest with the undue indulgence of the appetites alone. Those active principles, which, under the name of the propensities and passions, rank decidedly higher in the scale of our sentient nature, are hardly less hurtful, when indulged to excess, than excessive bodily appetites. This remark may perhaps be illustrated by a brief reference to the operations of a passion, which is obviously implanted for wise and beneficial purposes, and whose perversions are both less numerous and less injurious than those of some others ; we refer to the passion of Fear. If all the various facts which go to make up the history of this passion could be presented before the reader, he would at once see what an immense obstacle an undue intensity of the passions presents to the unencumbered and vigorous exercise of the Will, when such exercise is put forth or is proposed to be put forth in any direction at variance with the precise line of the passion itself. If it be otherwise, how can it have happened that many persons of clear perception, and of undoubted powers of intellect in every respect, have nevertheless been the complete slaves of the irresistible sway of the passion now referred to !

There is one individual, whose mournful history is so familiar that a mere suggestion of it will answer our purpose ; we refer to the English poet Cowper. The passion of fear in this amiable and interesting writer (operating undoubtedly on a constitution easily excited and nervous) was so undue in its influence, that the will was often entirely overcome and prostrated ; and he was often unable to perform what other persons, infinitely his

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inferiors in the length and breadth of intellectual perception, would have conceived a very easy thing to be done. While in some respects (all those which go to constitute a man of literature and a poet) but very few men could justly claim a superiority over him, he sunk in others to the grade of infantile weakness; and so conscious was he of this, that his vivid imagination represented him as the subject of ridicule and sport among those he met with in the streets.

We recollect to have seen it represented in a German writer of deserved celebrity, that the key to the character of the Apostle Peter, whose active and benevolent life was often strangely anomalous and inconsistent with itself, is to be found in the undue operation of the passion of fear. And there seems to be much truth in the remark. If one will carefully recall the incidents in the life of that devout and faithful follower of our Saviour, he will readily recognise how applicable the remark is. When the disciple, with an undue confidence which is not unfrequently found associated with an undue susceptibility to fear, assured the Saviour he would not forsake him though all others should, he undoubtedly uttered what he felt, and what he felt too, when he made the asseveration, most deeply and sincerely. But when the Saviour's prospects were clouded, when the hour of the prince and of the powers of darkness came, when the shepherd was smitten and the smiters seemed to have all might in their hands, then it was that those intense misgivings and fears, to which this devoted follower of Christ had probably been always subject, came rushing in, billow upon billow, till they overwhelmed all the landmarks of love and of duty, and bore him away captive into the camp of the enemy.

We repeat it, therefore, that we should carefully study the nature of the appetites, propensities, and passions; we must make them the objects of a patient and assiduous culture; we must in particular subject them to a strict supervision and control; otherwise, in some unexpected hour, they will arise in their might, and, in defiance of the clamours of conscience and the struggles of the voluntary power, will bring the whole man under their dominion.—True as it undoubtedly is, that the will has a real and substantive power in itself, it is still true that this power has its limits, and cannot withstand everything; it is still true that every inordinate exercise of the appetites and passions trenches upon the sphere of the voluntary faculty, and diminishes something from the freeness and vigour of its action.

§ 248. *Importance of repressing the outward signs of the passions.*

But is it a fact, that the propensities and passions are actually under our control in any degree? It cannot be doubted. Instances have already been given which show it. There is a very striking remark of Mr. Locke on this subject, in his interesting chapter on Power. “Let not any one say he cannot govern his passions, nor hinder them from breaking out and carrying him into action; *for what he can do before a prince or a great man, he can do alone, or in the presence of God, if he will.*”— But, granting the general fact, the inquiry still remains, What course shall be taken, what particular method shall be adopted, in order to control them and keep them in their place? Our limits will not permit us to undertake an answer to this question ~~at~~ length; and we shall

accordingly leave the whole subject to the reflections and good judgment of the reader, with a few remarks upon a single topic, which is the more interesting as it has seldom attracted notice; certainly not that degree of notice to which it is justly entitled.—There is a tendency in every emotion and passion to express itself outwardly by means of natural signs, such as the motions of the eye, the changes of colour in the countenance, the movements of the muscles, and the tones of the voice. As the tendency is a natural one, it may be difficult to control it entirely; but it is highly important to attempt to do so. And the reason is, (and a singular fact it is in the economy of the mind,) that the outward expression reacts upon the inward principle, and gives increased intensity to the internal feeling. “As every emotion of the mind,” says Mr. Stewart, “produces a sensible effect on the bodily appearance, so, upon the other hand, when we assume any strongly expressive look, and accompany it with appropriate gestures, some degree of the correspondent emotion is apt to arise within us. Mr. Burke informs us, that he has often been conscious of the passion of anger rising in his breast, in consequence of counterfeiting its external signs; and I have little doubt, that, with most individuals, the result of a similar experiment will be the same. Campanella, too, the celebrated philosopher and physiognomist, (as Mr. Burke further observes,) when he wished to form a judgment of what was passing in the mind of another, is said to have mimicked, as accurately as possible, his appearance at the moment, and then to have directed his attention to the state of his own feelings.”\*

\* Stewart’s Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind, vol. iii., ch. ii., § ii.

Furthermore, as the tendency of the emotions and passions is to express themselves outwardly, every suppression of the outward signs operates as a direct rebuke and curtailment of the passions themselves. The passions, when they are excited, are of such a violent nature, that they require an open field, a free, unencumbered circuit; and they cannot well exist in their higher degrees of intensity without this opportunity of expansion and of unencumbered action. Shut them up, therefore, in the bosom; enclose them amid the dim shades and the walls of the penetralia of the soul; and they will necessarily wither and die. When they are thus enclosed, they will not be more likely to live and flourish than the tree will that is shut out from the light of the sun and from the genial airs of heaven.

This is a principle of great practical consequence in the government of the passions, and, of course, in the discipline of the will. Never give to the passions (of course, it will be understood that we have no reference to the mild and benevolent passions, but to the evil, and malignant, and angry passions) an outward expression, either verbal or physiognomical, with the exception of those cases where the actual state of things does undoubtedly require it. We may suppose a case, where we may not only be angry with a person, but where also it is desirable that he should know it; but in a vast majority of cases, it is exceedingly better that they should be known only to the bosom where they originate. In one of the well-known Resolutions of President Edwards, which are worthy of the attention of the mere philosopher as well as of the Christian, after resolving against uneasiness and fretfulness in a certain case, he resolves further, never to suffer the effects of such uneasiness or fretfulness, "so

much as in the least alteration of speech, or motion of my eye." A strong intimation, to say the least, how unbecoming he considered the outward expression of the unamiable passions, and how injurious, in ordinary cases, he deemed such an expression to the subject of them.

§ 249 *Of enlightening the intellect in connexion with the discipline of the will.*

But in order to give the will a suitable opportunity of action by removing the obstructions in its way, and especially in order to furnish an adequate and ample basis for its operations, we must go further back than the Sensibilities, which are in immediate proximity with it, and consider it in its connexion with the Intellect. This is a prominent and leading view of the whole subject of the discipline of the will. It cannot be doubted that, among the most available and decisive methods of aiding and regulating the action of the will, we must include the illumination of the intellect. As a general thing, the voluntary power will act the more decisively in reference to any given object, in proportion as such object is the more fully understood. We do not mean to say that the perceptions of the intellect alone, and without anything further, will furnish a basis for the action of the will. The Intellect and the Will are entirely separated from each other, as we have already seen in the First Part of this work. But the intellect reaches and operates, and, we may say, *powerfully* operates, upon the will through the medium of the sensibilities. For instance, we are required to pursue a certain course, but it certainly cannot be expected that we should have any feeling in the case, or that we should put forth any action in respect to it, until

we understand what it is. Why is it that men are so inactive, so supine on subjects of the greatest moment to the welfare of the whole human race? It is, because, wholly taken up with their own private affairs, they do not give their attention to them; they do not investigate and understand them; of course, they do not feel, and, being destitute of feeling, they do not act. Hundreds of millions of the human race are living and dying without any of those aids and consolations which a knowledge of the religion of Jesus Christ is calculated to impart. And yet it is universally admitted, both in consideration of the reasonableness of the thing and of the commands of Scripture, that it is a duty incumbent on Christian nations to see that blessed Gospel sent to them without delay. But why is it that so few feel in heart what they acknowledge speculatively, and that almost none are found to offer themselves as personal labourers in this great and glorious work? It is because (at least this is one great and prominent reason, if it be not the only one) their inquiries have been too limited; they have not explored the length and breadth of that unspeakable wretchedness incidental to a state of heathenism; they have been satisfied with generalities and abstract truisms, without carefully and seriously estimating, even in a single instance, the extent of that degradation implied in bowing down to images of wood and stone; without sitting down and counting, one by one, the tears, and the groans, and the wailings, the crime and the hopelessness of the present life, and the weight of misery in the life to come.

We would illustrate the prominent idea of this section by another topic. One of the greatest evils which has ever afflicted the human race is that of war. But still only a very few individuals appear to be fully awake to

its dreadful atrocity, and are seriously, and with an earnestness proportioned to the importance of these movements, arraying their efforts and their influence against its continuance. The great mass of mankind are indifferent and inert. And how can we account for it ? In the same way we account for their indifference to the spread of the Gospel. It is owing (we do not say wholly, but in a great degree certainly) to inattention to the subject, and consequent ignorance of it. They dwell upon a few general and often erroneous conceptions of skill and heroism, as they are detailed in the pages of a government Gazette, but they do not bring distinctly and fixedly before their eyes the burnings, and the devastations, and the famine which overspread the country ; they do not behold the wounds, and the protracted suffering, and the horrid forms of the battle-field ; they do not listen to the mourning and the lamentation of the bereaved father and mother, whose gray hairs go down with sorrow to the grave. If they would but once consider the subject in all its facts and in all its bearings, they could not fail both to feel and to act ; they would at once lift up a note of remonstrance, which should reach their rulers, and compel them to stop in their ministrations of blood.

§ 250. *Further remarks on the same subject.*

A multitude of similar illustrations might be brought forward. In almost any case whatever, if we can induce a person to examine a subject with a view to action, the work is half done. And what is true of others is true of ourselves. If we propose to act, we must think seriously upon that, whatever it is, to which the proposed action relates. The proper, and, we may add, the indis-

*pensable* preliminary to action, is investigation. We are so constituted, that it is impossible for us to put forth a volition without a motive, without some antecedent feeling, without some appetite, some desire, some moral feeling already existing in the mind. But it is equally impossible, as has already appeared in the chapter on the Relation of the Intellect to the Will, that the various emotions and desires should exist, without some specific object perceived by the understanding, to which such emotions and desires relate. It is a fundamental law of our nature, that there can be no action of the will without feeling ; and that there can be no feeling without intellection. There is, therefore, an indirect, but a very intimate and important connexion between the intellect and the will. If we would will, we must feel ; and if we would feel, we must understand. As a general thing, (it will be noticed that we do not lay down the proposition as one admitting of no exception whatever,) the will corresponds to the intellect ; the action of the will is in a line with the action of the intellect ; and changes in the intellect will almost necessarily induce corresponding changes in the sentient and voluntary parts of the mental constitution. And hence it happens, that what is desired at one time, will soon cease to be desired when presented to the mind in some new light. What is warmly approved at one time, will suddenly become, on further examination and knowledge of all the circumstances, an object of disapprobation. And, on the other hand, objects of disapprobation and aversion may soon become, on further inquiry, objects of approbation and desire. In this way, by exerting our powers of inquiry and reasoning, and by presenting new facts to the mind, we are continually presenting new motives, and are indirectly,

but very effectively, operating changes in the action of the voluntary faculty ; and (what is an important circumstance in this connexion) these inquiries are made, and these changes are brought about, under the direction of the will itself. And thus, in the wonderful constitution of the human mind, there are wheels within wheels ; effective springs of action operating upon each other ; motives regulating the will, and the will taking a different direction and regulating the motives ; a reciprocal action and influence of each part without detriment to its appropriate nature.

§ 251. *Of aiding the will by a reference to the regard of others.*

We may sometimes give strength to the action of the will, in those numerous cases where we find ourselves vacillating, and uncertain what to do, by various aids external to ourselves. As our Creator never designed that men should live isolated from each other and alone, so He has admirably fitted them up with those mental capacities and tendencies which are precisely adapted to a state of society. While he has implanted within them a strong desire for each other's company, which brings them together in communities, he has, at the same time, so constituted them, that they naturally exercise a regard and esteem for whatever is kind, honourable, and upright. And it is altogether suitable and just, that they should avail themselves of this arrangement of things in whatever way it can be made subordinate to the discharge of their personal duties, and to the general perfection of their character. In a single word, they are at liberty to sustain themselves in any proposed course of action, by

taking into view, and by receiving, as an encouragement to them, the favourable estimates of public opinion.

We would not, however, be understood to say, that a regard to the good opinion of others should be the sole and paramount rule of conduct; since our constitution develops a higher rule, that of the moral sense, to which every other one is not only subordinate, but responsible. Nevertheless, it is undoubtedly true, that a suitable regard, as has been remarked, may safely and justly be paid to the favourable opinions of our fellow-men. The regard and approbation which they not unfrequently bestow on those whose conduct they are called upon to witness, is one of those natural rewards which the Creator has appointed as an attendant upon virtue. When, therefore, we are strongly tempted, by the influence of prejudice, passion, or self-interest, to pursue an erroneous though pleasing and favourite course, it is important to aid the will by presenting before it, as a counteracting motive, the judgment of enlightened public sentiment; remembering that there is something in the heart of man which is instinctively responsive to the just and true in human conduct, not only to condemn or approve such conduct as right or wrong, but to despise or to honour it as ennobling or as degrading. He whose fixed and immovable volition is always coincident with the requisitions of immutable rectitude, is cheered by the hearty and consentient voice of the wise and good. While he who yields himself to an evil course, or even weakly vacillates between the right and the wrong, can expect nothing but their aversion and their frowns.

§ 252. *Of aiding the will by a reference to the conscience*

But particularly in those conflicts of life where we find the will halting between two opinions, we should refer, as has already been intimated, to the consolations and guidance of that higher power within us, the Moral Sense. It is undoubtedly true, that we may derive strength from an enlightened public sentiment; but it cannot be denied, that public opinion is always changeable and sometimes wrong. We may perhaps admit, that in a large majority of cases it is just in its decisions; but still it is obviously so imperfect as a rule of action, that we greatly need some other; not, perhaps, of a more amiable aspect, but certainly more lofty in its bearing and more inflexible in its requisitions. He who constantly subjects himself to the influence of the general rule, that conscience is never to be violated, who strictly observes it in small things as well as in great, is a tower of strength to himself. Beginning to feel as if he were in some degree acting up to the dignity of his nature, he finds within himself a fountain of joy springing up with spontaneous and everlasting freshness. While he builds, as it were, a mighty wall around the will to prevent its erring into forbidden paths, he at the same time gives it direct and positive strength to pursue its onward and allotted course. In all cases whatever, however we may explain the fact, *rectitude is strength*. If it is true that knowledge is power, it is still more so that moral uprightness is power. It will always be found, that he who faithfully walks within the magical circle of virtue, experiences an invisible protection; but when the limit is once passed over, he is left to himself, and rushes headlong. There is profound

wisdom in the terse and emphatic expressions of a Roman writer, "UBI SEMEL RECTO DEERRATUM EST, IN PRÆCEPS PERVENITUR."

§ 253. *Of the aids furnished by the principle of imitation.*

We here take the liberty of recalling to the reader's notice a remark already made, to the effect that the power of the will is a definite thing; that, although it may not be precisely the same in every individual, it has nevertheless, in every case, its fixed limits of capability and action; and that we cannot reasonably expect from it what is obviously beyond its ability. And hence the propriety of always keeping in mind its true nature; of carefully considering what it *can* do, and what it *cannot* do, in order to aid it in cases of doubt and trial in every possible way.

Among other directions important to be kept in mind, we may make the further remark, that the operations of the will may be greatly aided by availing ourselves of the principle of Imitation. Of the nature of this principle we propose to say nothing further than to remark, in a word, that it is an original one, and is very extensive and powerful in its influence; perhaps there is none more so. Hence in common life, and particularly on extraordinary occasions, we find constant appeals to it. When soldiers are on the eve of a battle, the commander instigates them to the great and decisive effort, not only by the consideration of what is due to their country, but by setting before them the example of others who fell in the renowned fields of war. In the numerous and sanguinary battles of Napoleon, he rarely permitted his soldiers to advance into the conflict without reminding them of the

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great days and heroes of victory, and endeavouring to inflame their courage and to increase their energy by proposing for their imitation the soldiers of Lodi and Marengo, of Jena and Austerlitz.

It will be naturally understood, that we introduce this instance merely as an example of the power of the principle, and of the use which has been made of it. It would be much to be lamented if there were no other examples than those of a military kind to sustain in trial, and to encourage to endurance and effort in trying emergencies. In the ordinary trials of life ; in those perplexities which assail us from every side ; in those afflictions, both bodily and mental, which poor and corrupted humanity is heir to, we often feel our best resolutions breaking up and giving way, and we should wholly fall into despair, did we not draw encouragement and support from the faith and fortitude of those who have been in similar situations. Discouraged and fainting, we rest our weary heads on the bosoms of those who have gone before us, and find ourselves refreshed. The Scriptures themselves fully recognise the propriety of this resource, and furnish us with some striking examples of an appeal to it. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, in particular, seems to have availed himself of this principle of our nature. After mentioning Abel, and Enoch, and Abraham, and Moses, and a multitude of others, that great host of olden time, who subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, had trial of mockings, scourgings, and imprisonment, and of whom, in a word, the world was not worthy, he adds, as if he would instigate those whom he addressed to follow an example so glorious, “ Wherefore, seeing we also are encompassed about by so great a cloud of witnesses, let

*us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."* The sacred writers everywhere encourage and exhort us to follow in the path of our blessed Redeemer ; "*who suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps.*" And how many, in all ages of the world, have turned their weeping eyes to the Captain of their salvation ; and beholding him firm and unmoved in temptation, constant and persevering in his labours, patient in suffering, benevolent and forgiving to his enemies, having but the one great object of doing his Father's will, have been transformed into the likeness of his glorious image, and, like him, have been made perfect through tribulation ?

§ 254. *Of aiding the will by placing ourselves in circumstances which do not admit of a retreat.*

We may sometimes aid the action of the will by placing ourselves in a position from which there is no retreat. We sometimes express it by saying, that we have taken, or are about to take, a decisive step ; meaning a step which is more or less an irretrievable one ; a step which fully and completely pledges us to a certain course. We may suppose, with some reason, that Julius Cæsar, when he approached the banks of the Rubicon, felt some hesitation and vacillancy of purpose ; he scarcely knew himself what he was going to do ; his will stood balancing on a pivot ; and it was uncertain in which direction it would throw itself ; but when he had once passed the small stream that constituted the boundary of his province ; when, by a single movement onward, he had changed his position in relation to the government of his

country, then all was done ; there was no possibility of retreat ; his purpose at once became fixed, irrevocable, unchangeable.

In many cases in common life, when the will is vacillating between various objects, we may establish it firmly and for ever by a step onward, by placing ourselves in a new position, by appealing to a Higher Power for the uprightness of our intentions, and making an irretrievable movement. And we have here an effective principle of action ; one, upon the application of which the most important issues have sometimes depended. The true course of action, in all cases where the path of duty is unquestionably plain, and when, at the same time, the world and its allurements interpose to hinder us from entering into that path, is, not to sit down sluggishly and hold an inglorious parley with the suggestions of indolence and vice, but to move forward, to commit ourselves at once, to take a decided step, to throw ourselves into the breach, and let the consequences take care of themselves.

§ 255. *Of the effects of habit in giving strength to the will.*

In illustrating that course which is to be taken in order to give strength to the will, it is proper and important to bring into account the great principle or law of habit. Of the nature and tendencies of this law, it is enough to say in this connexion, that no other law of our mental constitution is capable of so entirely modifying the mental action as this. We often see its results in the case of the vicious man, whose unholy propensities go on strengthening and strengthening under its influence, till they assume the stubbornness and inflexibility of iron. But the

principle in question is as powerful for good as for evil; and we do not fully understand the secret of our own strength till we have learned its power, and how to apply it. When we set out upon a course of virtue, our resolution may be feeble; not unfrequently we shall find ourselves faltering in our purpose; and it seems to be with great difficulty that the voluntary power is brought fully up into a line with that course which we deem it important to pursue. But it is the result of the principle of habit, that every act of the Will in this right direction gives vivacity and strength to the succeeding act. So that, if a man once enters upon a virtuous course, if he once sets his foot into the strait and narrow way, then every step which he takes will greatly increase the elasticity and the ease, the rapidity and firmness of his movement.

§ 256. *Of strengthening the will by religious considerations.*

Finally, we may give great strength and energy to the action of the Will by means of religious considerations. Let it ever be our serious desire and determination, in the numerous perplexities and temptations of life, to look constantly to that beneficent Power who presides over the destiny of men and of worlds, and without whom (whatever human pride may assert to the contrary) there is no race to the swift and no battle to the strong. Everything of a religious nature, the goodness of God, the astonishing condescension and love of the Saviour, the completeness and mercy of the great plan of salvation, the shortness and rapidity of time, the solemnities of death, the dread realities and pomp of the judgment day, a boundless eternity, the inconceivable joys of heaven, and the

inconceivable wretchedness of a rejection from God's favour ; all these things may operate upon the mind, either singly or with various forms and degrees of combination ; and as they cluster around the great principles of action, they will be found infusing into them an element of vitality, and imparting a strength which can be derived from no other source. The world is full of instances. In all periods of the history of the human race, men have witnessed the power of religious considerations in imparting patience, endurance, and vigour of purpose. They have seen it in the chamber of sickness, in the solitary dungeon, on the iron bed of torture, in the flaming furnace, in the voluntary exile among barbarous tribes, in hunger, and cold, and nakedness, in dens and caves of the earth, in desert islands and wildernesses. Other considerations may undoubtedly give strength, but those of religion give *more* ; mere worldly motives may impart a considerable degree of vigour, but the ennobling incentives, drawn from the character and government of God, inspire an energy far more intense, as well as more elevated and pure. How many have been able to say with Pellico, in the miseries of his ten years' imprisonment, " religion taught me to experience a sort of pleasure in my troubles, to resist and to vanquish in the battle appointed me by Heaven !" How many in a yet higher strain have been able to say with the three pious friends of the prophet Daniel, " We are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace." How many in all ages of the world have been sustained by such unspeakable energy, extracted from the quickening elements of religion, that they could truly exclaim with the poor and suffering Waldenses, when encircled with fire and

sword in their Alpine fastnesses, and hurled "*mother with infant down the rocks,*"

" Yet better were this mountain wilderness  
And this wild life of danger and distress,  
Watchings by night and perilous flight by day,  
And meetings in the depths of earth to pray,  
Better, far better, than to kneel with them,  
And pay the impious rite thy laws condemn."



## N O T E

### ON THE SLAVERY OF THE WILL.\*

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A DESIRE having been expressed that I should apply more distinctly the views of the foregoing Treatise to the question of the slavery of the Will, so far as such slavery may be supposed to connect itself with man's devotional or religious nature, I have thought proper to add in a Note some brief statements, which may serve, if nothing more, as the outlines of an analysis of that great subject. —I believe it is the doctrine of nearly all Theological as well as of many Philosophical writers, that, in the things of religion, the human Will, in its own unaided action, is, in some important sense of the terms, enthralled or enslaved. I will subjoin the statements of a few of the leading theological creeds, as illustrative of what we mean by this general statement.

**EPISCOPALIAN.**—“The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith, and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will.”

**PRESBYTERIAN.**—“Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of Will to any spiritual good

\* See Part iii., § 191, and the accompanying Note.

accompanying salvation, so as a natural man, being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin, is not able by his own strength to convert himself or to prepare himself thereunto." (The Congregational Creed, as laid down in the Savoy Confession, is the same on this subject with the Presbyterian.)

**METHODIST.**—The doctrine of the Methodist Episcopal Church on this subject, as it was agreed upon and adopted at the organization of the American branch of that Church in the Conference of 1784, appears to be the same, as we should naturally expect it would be from its original connexion with the Episcopal Church, with the Episcopalian doctrine as above given. It is therefore unnecessary to repeat it.

The fact of man's enthralment in the matters of religion, so that he finds himself unable, by his own unaided efforts and acts of will, to fulfil the Divine requirements, we may properly leave to be settled by the professed and learned teachers of religion, to whom it must ever be an inquiry of the most serious import. We consider it quite important, on a number of accounts, that Mental Philosophy should not intrude unnecessarily upon the legitimate boundaries of Theology. Our object here is, supposing the fact in question to be ascertained or generally admitted, to illustrate it (not to prove, but merely to *illustrate it*), so far as can be done in a few brief statements, in its philosophical relations.

**FIRST.**—The first thing to be noticed in the philosophical illustration and analysis of this fact is, that the Will may be disturbed in its action, and enthralled or enslaved in respect to *some things and not in respect to others*. A man, for instance, who, in respect to the use of intoxicating drinks, is mentally enslaved, so much so that all his

unaided powers of Will are not sufficient to sustain him against the influence of this temptation, may nevertheless be mentally free in other respects; exhibiting in everything which does not come within the reach of his specific mental malady, all the good judgment, the activity, and the energy which characterize other men. Accordingly, a Philosophy of the Will, which embraces and illustrates the general fact of the Will's Freedom, will nevertheless furnish a sufficient basis for particular and insulated cases of enthralment, such as that which is now under consideration.

SECOND.—A second remark is, that a disordered or abnormal state of the Will may exist in two forms, viz., Positive and Relative. The Will may be spoken of as POSITIVELY disordered when it is naturally, and by its very constitution, so imbecile and weak as to fail of that supervisory control and voluntary enforcement which are characteristic of its normal or sane state. It may be regarded as RELATIVELY in a disordered or alienated condition when it fails to perform the duties which pertain to it as a voluntary power, not so much on account of any positive defect inherent in itself, as in consequence of the inordinate and disordered action of the other parts of the mind. The power which is lodged in an individual Will is at any given moment a definite thing, and, accordingly, is capable of enduring a certain amount of pressure, which may be brought to bear upon it from some other part of the mind; but any increase beyond that amount deprives it at once of its position of pre-eminence and control, and drags it down prostrate and enslaved at the feet of some other stimulated and insanely energetic principle.

THIRD.—We may infer, from what has been said, that

the theological doctrine of the slavery of the Will (we leave it to Theologians to ascertain the FACT of such slavery) does not necessarily involve any psychological difficulty ; in other words, is not necessarily inconsistent with the doctrines of the Will, as commonly laid down by mental philosophers. And we may add also, as agreeing best with all the facts in the case, that the slavery of the Will, in the theological sense of the expressions, is rather RELATIVE than positive. This last remark will require some explanation.—It is at this point in the inquiry that the doctrine of the slavery of the will connects itself with the doctrine of human depravity. In respect to the subject of Depravity, it is the doctrine of Edwards, in which it is well known he has the concurrence of many distinguished writers of other Christian denominations, that human nature is originally depraved by the *defect*, *privation*, or *absence* of what is good, rather than by the positive implantation of what is evil. He maintains, that the natural principles which are implanted within us, such as the natural appetites, propensities, and affections, are good in their place, and that the moral evil which is incident to our present state connects itself with what is taken away or lost. In connexion with this general view of the subject, we are naturally led to inquire specifically, what that principle is which is wanting in us. Evidently the principle of SUPREME LOVE TO GOD; by which is meant a love to God which is suited to the nature of the great Being towards whom it is directed, and which consequently holds a leading or paramount position, making every other principle and every other attachment entirely subordinate. Now if we suppose this great principle, in consequence of the Fall of Adam, or for any other cause, to be re-

removed or to be inordinately weakened, it is the natural consequence that the lower principles of our nature, such as the appetites and the various propensities of which a particular account is given in systems of mental philosophy, immediately become excessive in their operation. This is particularly true of that original or implanted DESIRE OF HAPPINESS which is common to all mankind, and which is commonly denominated the principle of SELF-LOVE. We may reasonably conjecture (at least the supposition is not excluded by any psychological difficulty) that the very first throb of this principle, on the supposition either of the absence or of the entire prostration of the higher principle of love to God, is inordinate and excessive. In other words, it may be supposed to drop from the very beginning the mitigated and regular exercise to which we properly give the name of SELF-LOVE, and to assume the irregular and inordinate exercise which is properly denominated SELFISHNESS, which, in distinction from the repressed and authorized exercise of the principle, is always and entirely wrong. This unrestrained and evil exercise of mind becomes more and more unrestrained and evil, in accordance with a well-known law of the mind's action, by long-continued and frequent repetition. In a word, selfishness, under the influence and impulse of the law of habit, becomes ascendant ; it assumes the place of a predominant and controlling principle ; and, secure in its position and its power, exercises a tyrannical and almost unlimited control. Accordingly, when it is proposed to an irreligious individual, who is, of course, under the control of selfishness, to love God with all his heart and mind, and to love his neighbour as himself, he is found unable in his own strength to do it. And hence, in this particular, the Will is said to

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be *enslaved*. Not because, in itself considered, it is destitute of power; not because it is positively, and in its own nature, disordered; but because the selfish tendency has become so operative, intense, and violent, that it no longer has power to subdue and regulate it.

FOURTH.—If man's Will be enslaved, so that he cannot of himself be and do what is required of him, what shall be said, on philosophical principles, of his accountability? The theological doctrine in general terms is, that, whatever may be true of the slavery of the Will in the things of religion, man's accountability remains; and that he is not only required to do what is right and to avoid what is wrong, but that he is justly condemned, in particular, for not serving and loving God just as the Scriptures demand of him. This view is undoubtedly a correct one; and yet the human mind, in its search after justice as well as truth in this matter, will be desirous to find something explanatory of this seemingly inconsistent state of things, viz., slavery on the one hand, and moral accountability on the other. Different explanations are given by different theological writers. It will be said by some, for instance, that man, in virtue of his connexion with Adam as the natural and federal head of the race, and also by his own personal acts, has brought himself into his present ruined situation. He has destroyed himself; and, therefore, stands accountable both for his present ruined state, and also for everything which naturally flows out of that ruin.

But it is believed that Theologians commonly meet the difficulty here, in addition, perhaps, to the view just referred to, by connecting with the doctrine of the religious slavery of the Will the great conservative doctrine of the grace of God, purchased by the blood of Christ,

and manifested in the shape of a general and adequate offer of Divine assistance to all who will sincerely do all they can for their religious restoration, whether it be more or less. It is this view which was referred to in the concluding paragraph of § 169. Prostrate and enthralled by sin as we are, we may still, by the *grace of God*, speak of our freedom and accountability in religious things as well as in others, and that, too, without any prejudice either to fact or to language ; but not in such a way as to appropriate to ourselves any merit. We find in Christ that purchased freedom which we had lost in Adam. And hence those frequent Scriptural appeals which are made to us, just as if we had not lost our strength. We cannot of ourselves break our chains ; but Theologians very properly assure us, that there is a sense in which we may take hold of the arm of Christ, which has power to break them for us. Hence, although in our natural and enthralled state (if we choose to call it such) we can undoubtedly make important efforts of a certain kind, and which have a connexion more or less intimate with our final destiny, we are nevertheless properly said to be saved by the Divine power, and to have no merits of our own. The necessity of human effort, in whatever shape and to whatever extent it is put forth, and the accessory and consummating influence of divine grace, seem both to be referred to in that interesting and instructive passage : “ Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling ; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure ”

THE END.













